Studies in
Contemporary English Drama

by

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Preface by

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Published by
The Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop
165, Mohamed Farid Street, Cairo

2001

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Preface

This volume contains six studies on a variety of topics in diverse areas of contemporary British, Irish, and American drama. The variety and diversity which specify these studies reflect the author's wide-ranging critical outlook as well as his profound view in tackling contemporary issues and concepts as they are represented in dramatic texts. However, despite the diversity of issues and topics tackled here, one could detect a certain unity that binds them all together. This unifying thread could be identified as the "pivotal idea" which serves as an axis around which the various topics and issues revolve.

A "pivotal idea", by its nature, is indeterminate, fluid, and all-pervading. Due to these essential features, the pivotal idea floats on the surface sometime, and rests deep beneath most of the time. In my opinion, the pivotal idea that binds the six studies in this volume could be formulated as the theme of the search for identity in contemporary European and American drama as exemplified in some of the works of major British, Irish, and American dramatists.

The search for identity implies two issues: the "search", and "identity". Both issues reflect the subjectivity and specificity

of the themes tackled by the various authors in their dramatic and theatrical presentations. The subjectivity, in turn, points to a variety of angles of interpretation of the pivotal idea, namely, the search for identity.

The concept of identity, philosophically, has been generally identified as an autonomous entity equated with rational thinking and consciousness. Personal identity, as defined by Locke, means that a person is "a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places; which it does only by that consciousness which is inseparable from thinking and is essential to it." (**Essay On Human Understanding**, Ch. XXVII, "Personal Identity").

Through his personal interpretation of reality, Tom Stoppard represents his own travesty of reality which consists of a different variety of versions of reality as seen by their creator. Travesties is an extra-ordinary mélange of the political and artistic ideologies that were trendy during the war years of 1914-18. The space that unites these contradictory and mutually exclusive trends is Zürich where Joyce was writing Ulysses, Tristan Tzara was initiating Dadaism, and Lenin was waiting to bring his communist revolution to Russia. The ideas and words conveyed

in Travesties are quoted almost verbatim from their originators mouths. However, Stoppard moulds them in a sarcastic plot which displays his power to ridicule and satirize others' voices and opinions.

The reality, or rather realities, which Stoppard presents in Travesties could be called "versions of reality' or, in contemporary Cyper-language, "virtual reality". This demonstrates Stoppard's abundantly and infinitely relative and multi-dimensional perspectives on reality which, in the end, turn "reality" into "illusion". The certainty about reality with which the characters speak is ridiculously transformed into uncertainty about everything, including reality.

Consequently, with Stoppard's versions of "virtual reality" or "realities", the search for identity becomes a pretentious self-seeking façade, and identity itself becomes a mirage and ultimately evaporates into their air.

Another, almost equally skeptical, perspective on the nature of identity is represented by Brian Friel who sets off on a difficult journey in an attempt to solve the "mysteries of identity", using the terms of the author of this volume. Within these mysteries, which prove to be insoluble due to endless political and religious conflicts which are deeply rooted in the history of

Ireland and which have moulded the Irish national and cultural identity, the only available solution to the mysteries of identity seems to be the escape from identity to the unknown. Thus, identity, and the search for it, are once more negated.

In the third study, the pivotal idea emerges clearly on the surface and takes the form of a conscious search for self-identity, or the identity of the individual as opposed to that of the group which is represented by the family. The gothic style, adopted by Sam Shephard, very adequately translates his grotesque version of the reality that encompasses the consciousness of the self of its own identity. However, out of the grotesque, Shephard could ultimately emerge triumphantly from the painful and destructive journey throughout his trilogy with the positive self-consciousness that the institution of the family is an annihilating power of the individual self identity.

The fourth study in this volume demonstrates another level of the search for identity, namely, the level of ethnic and racial identity. Ethnic identity, or strictly ethnicity, refers to different racial and national groups and identifies them in terms of their shared practices, attitudes, traditions, norms and systems of belief which they inherited from a common historical origin in the past. Consequently, ethnicity or ethnic identity denotes the self-

awareness on the part of a particular group of its own cultural distinctiveness.

This is exactly what Lorraine Hansburry represents through her depiction of Arcadian landscapes which reflect her nostalgia for her African identity as well as her conscious will to untie all Afro-Americans in a quest for their lost African roots, and to forge a new African identity. This time, exceptionally, identity is not negated. However, identity only appears to be present if only as pale mirror reflections of the author's nostalgic memories.

Harold Pinter's search for identity delves into the deep recesses of the human psyche in a journey to recuperate the past through memory. In this journey, the unconscious holds sway over the characters' consciousness because human memory is selective and, thus, can only provide relative versions of the reality of existence, whether social or psychological. Hence, the search for identity in the past through memory leads to the obliteration of the identity, or identities, of the searcher.

The sixth and last study in this volume recaptures the theme of the second study here, namely, that dealing with the "mysteries of identity" in contemporary Ireland and Irish drama. The study shows that the "mysteries" have not been solved but

have become even more complicated with the emergence of new social phenomena that are connected with homecomings, such as drug trafficking, unemployment, emigration .... The "mysteries of identity" have become definitely insoluble due to the social reality which can only be surmounted by meaningless pastime pub conversations to ventilate the repressed aspirations of the individuals. However, this can only provide an illusory solution to the mysteries of the Irish national identity. Such mysteries are exhibited by the contradictions between the glorious revolutionary historic location and the dwindling and incapacitating present reality of an East town pub in Galway.

To conclude, the foregoing six research studies are a perfect illustration of the notion of the "pivotal idea" which constitutes the backbone of the literary critical studies contained in this volume. The search for identity, being the pivotal idea, determines the thematic and technical approach adopted by the author of this volume, hence, providing a wide-ranging perspective on the pivotal idea. Hence, the search for identity acquires a variety of levels and dimensions ranging from the ontological and linguistic in Stoppard's interpretative versions of reality, to Friel's, Bolger's and Murphy's depictions of the contemporary social-political realities, and passing through the

deep layers of the human psyche in Pinter's journey inside human memory, and emerging once more on the surface of an ethnic and racial reality in Hansberry's call for the creation of a new collective African identity within the American Society which contradicts with Shephard's individualistic perspective according to which identity seems to be endangered by the social power of the institution of the family.

This rich variety of studies provides an excellent nourishing meal for our intellectually starving students.

Mona Abousenna

Introduction

This book is meant to introduce scholars and researchers in the field of English literature to a variety of studies in contemporary English drama covering the Anglo-Irish and Euro-American contexts.

These studies were formerly published in diverse academic journals, after being presented in international and national conferences in the domains of contemporary English literature and theatre.

The first study tackles the concept of reality in two major plays of Tom Stoppard, namely, Travesties and The Real Thing. Though they slightly differ as to the themes they focus on, both plays follow similar dramatic devices of debate and dislocation to discuss reality from miscellaneous perspectives. Philosophical, aesthetic and literary views which mark the changing concept of reality are discussed in connection with Stoppard's dramatic style. The research paper suggests that reality is subject to various interpretations and is beyond any specific conceptualization of it due to socio-cultural, political and historical changes. It also suggests that while Stoppard implements history as an epistemological source to discuss the reality of art, politics and society in Travesties, he draws upon literature, echoing and borrowing scenes from other plays within the main dramatic context of The Real Thing to discuss the warped vision of the writer in his quest for finding "real" words to accurately represent actual reality. Through the ongoing discussions among characters, Stoppard manages via his own intellectual wizardry, to formulate his own concept of reality.

The second study included in this book discusses Brian Friel's anagogical vision of Irish identity which encompasses a whole history of troubles mysteries and failures. This is done in two of Friel's major plays: Philadelphia, Here I Come! (1965) and The Freedom of the City (1974) which pivot around his acute awareness of the dislocation of the individual from family and society. Although they differ as to the nature of their treatment of identity, both plays share similar dramatic forms of expression (rituals, misplaced voices, dislocation, music, suggestive colours, cross-talk), and other theatrical paraphernalia. While Philadelphia's technique is more adventurous and less intellectual than that of the alter plays, The Freedom marks the intellectual, emotional and cultural growth of Friel as well as a progress of his artistic and technical skills. While Philadelphia pictures Gar O'Donnell's ceaseless attempts to overpower his social failures and psychological frustrations and meditate on his future on the eve of his emigration to America, The Freedom concerns three Derry civilians, who due to their political activism, shot dead while struggling toward dignity and integrity within a manipulative institutionalized context of the state.

The third study deals with the concept of the Gothic in Sam Shepard's family trilogy: Curse of the Starving Class, Buried Child and True West. Imbued with the most frightening image of contemporary life-alienation from the self, the nation and the world, flagrant in decadence, doom, murder, rape, incest, patricide and infanticide - and haunted by unresolved familial ties that motivated him to plunge in the self, seeking for integrity and dignity, Sam Shepard has adopted a distinguished dramatic style that ranges from the surreal to the suprarealistic based on

startling physical images to convey his gothic imaginative potentials of contemporary life in America mired in socio-psychological and economic starvation. This is done within the gothic-line tradition in the Euro-American setting with the aim of establishing appropriate links between this topic and other works in the same domain. Shepard's bleak vision is dramatized in his family trilogy: Curse of the Starving Class (1976), Buried Child (1978) and True West (1980). To gothicize the sense of foreboding that dominates the trilogy's dramatic action, Shepard has theatricalized deformed characters with anarchic energy and distorted perception similar to those in Oedipal dramas with the aim of conveying sterility and escalating destructiveness of the contemporary American family institution.

The fourth theme tackled in this book rotates around Arcadian landscapes in Lorraine Hansberry's A Raisin in The Sun and The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window. Born and brought up with two warring ideals- American and black-in one coloured body in the most turbulent moments of world history: the two World Wars, The Cold War, the loss of many friends because of congenital diseases and the disquieting problems of world youth who indulged in drug addiction and alcoholism, Lorraine Hansberry (1930-1965) dramatizes her *Weltannschauung* which pivots around the inevitability of finding out a healthy environment for the continuity of human race. This is done within the Euro-American artistic framework of landscape with the aim of locating Hansberry's concept of landscape in its proper perspective. The study focuses on Hansberry's changing perception of Arcadian landscapes in her A Raisin in The Sun

(1959) and The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window(1963). While the former mirrors the playwright's psychic integration with her land, Africa shown in her focus on blacks who, according to her, should write their own history via adopting a pan Africanist approach to fan out their own experiences that would positively contribute to the continuity of humanity, the latter shows how its white inhabitants seek paths of escape from the unavoidable sense of being homeless and rootless.

The fifth study in this book tackles the theme of the journey in two of Harold Pinter's memory plays: Old Times (1971) and No Man's Land (1975) with the aim of tracing the dramatic implications of Pinter's thematic and technical implementations of the journey. To go back and forth, through detailed dialogic and narrative forms about their past experiences, and depending on the centrality of dramatic discourse as a focal human activity, the Pinterian characters use their memory as a revelatory tool of their socio-cultural and physical existence. Because of their failure to realize their era's archive, for the essence of their discourse is the unconscious, the characters are viewed as archetypal symbols of a journey. They ceaselessly seek to remember their experiences which, though distorted by time, provide a relativized image of their existence. Pinter's use of journeys, mental or physical, actual or imaginary, communicates perceived images of his characters' social reality.

The last study centres round contemporary Irish Drama and Postmodernist Ireland. Situated within the background of the Yeatsian writings on and for the theatre and located within the postmodern context with the aim of placing a new dimension in the Irish national

consciousness, this study tackles Tom Murphy's Conversations on A Homecoming (1984), and Dermot Bolger's The Lament for Arthur Cleary (1988). This is done within the framework of the contemporary Irish dramatic scene, in correspondence with radical socio-cultural, political and literary changes that have taken place in the 1970s and the 1980s, due to the accelerated rate of the economic, technological and industrial developments of the 1960s. While the dramatic setting of Conversations is a pub in an East town in Galway whose characters seek escape from inhibited conditions that stifle their sense of time and of real life, The Lament, whose setting is North Dublin discusses the nihilistic impact of postmodernism on the city of Dublin juxtaposing its dislocated inhabitants, with its historic locations and famous streets. Although Murphy and Bolger adhere to Yeats, Synge, O'Casey and Friel in their focus on the inevitability of historical consciousness, for the Irish writer, to consolidate a location where the Irish nation can remain a nation, they unlike Yeats, stress themes of a different nature implementing postnarrative technique to ventilate the repressed feelings of characters, through conversations, that rotate around such themes as drugs, unemployment, emigration and homecomings.

The Concept of Reality In Tom Stoppard's Travesties

And The Real Thing

Reviewing the theme of reality in modern literature, it has been observed that writers and critics have focused on history and philosophy in their treatment of reality in literature. In this respect, J.P. Stern states:

> The shift in literary register towards philosophical speculation which now takes place - the immense intellectualizing of literature we now witness - is something quite now. One important sign of this shift occurs in the term "reality", which, without shedding its characteristic philosophical usages, now fully enters both common discourse and creative literature (1984, 47).

The Middle Ages' notion of reality was shaped by the utter subjection to religious belief. With the development of literary theory, the attitude of the artist towards his art, particularly towards the nature of aesthetic reality, has been related to the change of attitude towards the aesthetic and the spiritual. In this connection, Erich Heller states:

> As reality becomes more real, so the symbol became more symbolic and art more artistic. The artist ceased to be a humble craftsman, supplying goods for the common trade between Heaven and earth. He set himself up as a dealer in very special specialties with a Heaven all to himself and an earth to look down upon (1975, 268).

The decline of the status of religion as symbol of aesthetic compositions resulted, according to Heller, in depriving "the language of religion as well as of art of an essential degree of reality" (268).

In the preface to his The Mirror and The Lamp, Mark Abrams explains two metaphors related to the mind and implied in the title. The metaphor of the mirror compares the mind to "a reflector of external objects," says Abrams; the metaphor of the lamp is compared "to a radiant projector which makes a contribution to the objects it perceives" (1977, vi). Abrams seems to agree with Heller in that since "art imitates the world of appearance and not of Essence, it follows that works of art have a lowly status in the order of existing things" (8).

Erich Auerbach built up his notion of reality in Western literature on the Platonic concept of *mimesis* referred to in the tenth book of The Republic in that imitation comes third in position to truth. Auerbach also stresses Dante's adoption of comedy as the most appropriate dramatic form for conveying true reality*.

According to Flannery O'Connor, truth is the sole aim of the artist in his creative process. "The basis of art is truth", says O'Connor, "both in matter and in mode. The person who aims after art in his work aims after truth, in an imaginative sense, no more and no less" (1972, 65).

This study focuses on reality as a representational dramatic concept in Tom Stoppard's most distinguished and thought - provoking plays: Travesties (1975) and The Real Thing (1982) with the aim of realizing the nature of the Stoppardian dramatic method followed in his attempt to invigorate his own concept of reality. This is done through discussing the

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*In Travesties and The Real Thing, Stoppard employed imitation and sheer humour to discuss his own vision of reality.

changing concept of reality and how constant changes have affected Stoppard's formulation of his own concept.

"Stoppard mentally divides his plays", Oleg Kerensky argues, "into the real ones, which are about something other than what they appear to be about and which take a long time to write, and the mere entertainments, which he can do very quickly" (1977, 168). Both Travesties and The Real Thing belong to Stoppard's "real" plays, which tackle serious themes with various levels of understanding and engender deep philosophical speculation on the subjects of art and life.

Of the various meanings of the term reality and its usage throughout the early twentieth - century German literature, J.P. Stern traces the etymology of the German word for reality, "wirklichkeit", which is "an abstract German noun formation from "wirken", and it historically exists in language to mean to effect by acting on" (41). In Greek, "reality", Stern expounds, "is cognate with the Greek "ergon" (= work, action, effect) and ergasomai" (=to work to be active, to pursue a craft)" (41).

Thus, "activity" which appears to be the predominant characteristic of reality connotes that reality "is neither static nor constant", says Luckacs, "the investigator can not exhaust its substance. It is, on the contrary, a constant flux - only revealing a definite, though never simple direction to the eye of the trained observer" (1972, 97)*

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*Stoppard relies on philosophical, historical and literary sources in his dramatic writings. This is based o his belief that in discussing various issues in art and life, one should not think of one mind. But two or three

Ernest Mach, the eminent philosopher, equates man's consciousness with the external world with all its concomitants of natural surroundings. Our ideas about the world are the physical objects that cause our sense of perception. Therefore, ideas could be reproduced and revitalized via free-association. And man's capacity to remember and recreate ideas formulates his consciousness. Mach elucidates:

> ...if I give free rein to my thoughts, without plan or purpose and as far as possible in isolation, as, for example, during a sleepless night, I soon drift into all manner of subjects: the comic and the tragic, remembered or invented constantly alternate with scientific inspiration and plans so that it would be difficult to identify the small accidental features that momentarily direct this flow of "free phantasy" (1926, 27-8)*.

The implementation of art as mirror reflecting reality has been a subject for discussion since Plato, persisting through the 18th century and up to the 20th century. "The recourse to mirror in order to illuminate the nature of one or another art continued", says Abrams, "to be a favourite with aesthetic theorists long after Plato" (32).

Hegel defines reality in a way as to use it interchangeably with actuality. In the translator's Preface to Hegel's Aesthetics: Lectures On Fine

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minds should struggle to perceive various perspectives on reality. For further details see Nancy Shield's interview with Stoppard (in Bareham, 1990, p. 16).

*This "drift into all manner of subjects" mentioned by Mach is a typical characteristic of Stoppardian dramatic style implemented through Carr's memory which is one of the major components of reality in Travesties. Carr's memory manages via its reactivation to reproduce historical events and associate philosophical and political documents.

Art, T.M. Knox elucidates that Hegel ascribes reality" and "truth" to the entire empirical internal and external world. Unlike other intellectuals who might consider art as a mere deceptive appearance, Hegel assures that reality lurks beyond man's sensation of external objects. He elucidates:

> ...art ... is and remains for us a thing of the past. Thereby it has lost for us genuine truth and life, and has rather been transferred into our ideas instead of maintaining its earlier necessity in reality and occupying its higher place. What is now aroused in us by works of art is not just immediate enjoyment but our judgement also, since we subject to our intellectual consideration (1975, 11).*

Schiller epistemologically views reality as an amalgamation of man's emotions and thoughts. While "emotion", says Schiller, "proceeds from the law of necessity, thoughts proceed from reality" (1981, 38). The realist's ultimate aim, is to search for the absolute epistemology.

Oscar Wilde views reality as the artist's mood objectified into a form of art, and argues that the quest for reality enables the artist to:

> Exhibit the object from each point of view and show it to us in the round, as a sculptor shows us things, gaining in this manner all the richness and reality of effect that comes from those side issues that are suddenly suggested by the central idea in its progress, and really illumine the idea more completely (1969, 391).

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*The dramatic spectacles of Travesties and The Real Thing are formulated and the characters are delineated to represent Stoppard's concept of reality, through the usage of physical objects implemented in the stage design, in colours, in music and fancy dress. Fancy dress, colours and décor, as visible objects, implemented in dramatic performances, are pointers of particular historical, political and artistic periods.

According to James Joyce, art is a method of liberating man from the sordidness of matter. While discussions of art, politics, and society encompassed in Travesties, whose plot is based on that of The Importance of Being Earnest, echo Wilde's concepts of art and life and Joyce's Ulysses in which Joyce made use of Homer's Odyssey, The Real Thing's focus on art and life echoes Henry James' short tale, "The Real Thing" which is a parable on life and art.

The dramatic spectacle of Travesties is set in two places. One is Henry Carr's drawing room of his apartment in Zurich during the First World War, the other is a section of Zurich Public library. The drama displays Stoppard's vision of the world and of people belonging to various trends of thought. Henry Carr manages via his memory to control time and action. This is done through his constant change of appearance and clothes to represent age and action in relation to time past and time present.

Carr successfully runs a debate to crystallize Stoppard's attitude towards the conflicting ideas of art, politics and history where diverse interpretations of socio-political, artistic and philosophical notions are reproduced, revitalized and given shape in discussion among characters. Entrapped in the chaos and passion of the First World War, Carr is too perplexed to adopt a specific philosophical and literary attitude towards reality. The same applies to the other Henry, the artist-protagonist in The Real Thing, who is prompted to seek objective tools to arrive at distinct concepts of art, love and dramatic writing.

In Travesties, the character's reality is defined by certain activities they are involved in throughout the play. Carr implements his memory to

project a certain concept of reality of the world during the war, Tzara is occupied with his dadaist ideas, Joyce is at work in Ulysses, Lenin composes his book on imperialism. Characters have negative reactions towards the war which renders everything absurd and meaningless. In discussing his concept of the real artist in Travesties, Stoppard, like Joyce, believes that if literature is not essentially based on a recognized objective reality, it could rely on the author's own personal experience, which, though it is subjective, is new and real. Stoppard's concept of the true artist is crystallized in the words of Henry Carr, who sees that the real artist is "someone who is gifted in someway that enables him to do something more or less well which can only be done badly or not at all by someone who is not thus gifted (38).

However, Erich Heller sees that the unreality of modern arts, particularly architecture, which is supposed to be the most real of all arts, is due to the remarkable lack of purely new models of human experience. He expounds:

> Civilization is a complex system of dams, dykes, and canals warding of, directing, and articulating the influx of the surrounding fluid element; a fertile fenland, elaborately drained and protected from the high tides of chaotic, unexercised, and inarticulate experience. In such a culture, stable and sure of itself within the frontiers of naturalize" experience, the arts yield their creative power not so much in width as in depth. They do not create new experience, but deepen and purify the old. Their works do not differ from one another like a new horizon from a new horizon, but like a Madonna from a Madonna (279).

In Travesties, the character of Joyce stresses one of the essential perspectives of Stoppard's own attitude towards the real artist.

Joyce: An artist is the magician put among men to gratify capriciously - their urge for immortality. The temples are built and brought down around him, continuously and contiguously, from Troy to the fields of Flanders. If there is any meaning in any of it, it is what survives as art, yes even in the celebration of tyrants, yes even in the celebration of nonentities. What now of the Trojan War if it had been passed over by the artist's touch? Dust. A forgotten expedition prompted by Greek merchants looking for new markets. A minor redistribution of broken pots. But it is we who stand enriched, by a tale of heroes, of a golden apple, a wooden horse, a face that launched a thousand ship - and above all, of Ulysses, the wanderer, the most human, the most complete of all heroes - husband, father, son, lover, farmer, soldier, pacifist, politician, inventor and adventurer .... It is a theme so overwhelming that I am almost afraid to treat it. And yet I with my Dublin Odyssey will double that immortality..(62)

The protagonists Tzara and Lenin appear to similar in that they are revolutionaries, but they differ as to the nature of their revolutionary ideas. Tzara seeks to transform art and its values through his dadaist ideas. But Lenin, attempts through his socio-political principles, to change the world. And it is evident that various social, artistic and political issues are expressed in such languages as English, Russian, French, Irish and German. And the sudden shifts from one language to the other and from one dramatic role of character to another, particularly the characters of Carr and Cecily, reveal different perspectival variations of reality. About

the characters' portrayal in Travesties so as to dramatize various views in art, politics and society, Kerensky states:

> Lenin is depicted as wishing to support the arts, but as being by nature a philistine and also conscious of the need for political censorship. Tzara puts the extreme cases of artistic freedom and for "art" meaning anything an artist cares to do, while Carr puts the "common sense" view that is simply to change the meaning of the word Art. In reply Tzara argues that politicians do the same thing with words like patriotism, duty, love, freedom, king and country (162).

In The Real Thing, Debbie, Henry's teenage daughter expresses her own revolutionary views on love and human relationships. She states:

> It's what lovers trust each other with, knowledge of each other, not of the flesh but through the flesh, knowledge of self, the real him, the real her, in *extremis*, the mask slipped for the face (69).

Debbie proceeds to confirm that "exclusive rights isn't love, it's colonization" (69).

To implement Lukacs' concept of history, as an epistemological source of reality, and to focus on Schiller's consideration of the realist's epistemological aim in his quest for reality, Stoppard borrows the principal characters of Travesties and The Real Thing from history. Stoppard, like Lukacs, sees that the relationship between the writer and history is not moving in a vacuum but "it is an important component", says Lukacs, "to the whole of reality especially society" (1976, 199).

However, Stoppard's view of history is not objective, according to Neil Sammells, who argues that "Stoppard or Old Carr creates history by

telescoping four years into one in order to create the events and meetings in Travesties" (387). Moreover, "his (Carr's memory") Sammells states, "lies in the way that all fiction lies, and his rewriting of history is, at a basic level, a dismissive parody of that most truth-telling of all fictional forms ...(380)

It is true that Travesties is controlled by Old Carr's memory. Carr presents twisted and imprecise historical and literary data about Tzara, Lenin, and Joyce. And, although they were all in Zurich, which was at the time of war "a magnet for refugees, exiles, spies, anarchists, artists and radicals of all kind" (Travesties, 69), they did not meet all together. Furthermore, Oscar Wilde is viewed as an exemplar of a dandiest and dissociated artist who is politically uncommitted. For instance, in Act II, While Cecily, the Marxist disciple, sees that art must change society, the aged Carr consciously or unconsciously twists Wilde's artistic and political views that one can observe in his critical writings to prove that he is politically committed. This misrepresented image of Wilde is dramatically introduced in the following dialogue:

Carr.....	Far from being a bugbear of the home Rule sodality Cecily, Wilde was indifferent to politics. He may occasionally have been a little over dressed but he made up for it by being immensely uncommitted.
Cecily:	That is my objection to him. The sole duty and justification for art is social criticism (74)

However, Sammells' view seems to disregard Stoppard's dramatic intentions in that he seems to make Travesties, as an on-stage world vie with the off-stage worlds of the present and the past, hence a source of contradictory values that lend themselves to various interpretations of social, artistic and political reality. The goal is to arrive at the complete epistemology of the ideas concerned; hence a total understanding of reality is reachable. To sustain that point of the theatrical functional role in conveying reality, Quigley sees that "The theatre achieves an importance far beyond that of merely replicating or illuminating a preexisting world off-stage: it becomes a potential rival to the world off stage, an independent ground for original knowledge" (1985, 24).

Reviewing Paul Johnson's book, Enemy of Society, which stresses liberal democracy based on Christian thought, Stoppard defends his attitude towards history against Johnson's charge that Travesties does not introduce real events in Zurich in 1917. He states:

> Johnson appears to think that because Travesties does not present "real" events in Zurich in 1917 it follows from that that I do not believe in real truthful history. But I do. My intellect tells me so. But art is not the child of pure intellect, it is equally the child of temperament. That is why it must be distinguished from other human pursuits which can indeed be true or false, and which deserved to be judged precisely as this book judges them, by the criteria of intellectual truth-statements which do not funk the possibility of refutation (677).

To discuss reality in Travesties, Stoppard draws upon historical events, political documentations, and social and artistic attitudes. And to reveal reality about various issues via intellectual investigation, we get into

a panorama of revolutionary characters, political and social events, or people outside the plays. Consequently, this has engendered various interpretations and discussions that result in war, not only in the social and political domains but also in the artistic arena. And in following the Hegellian dialectics to discuss reality from various perspectives, Stoppard creates contradictions in views and claims among the debaters. The aim is to arrive at a definite concept of reality in the flux of time through a dramatic structure of intersections and continuity. And although characters in Travesties seem stereotypical, their stereotypically is dramatically purposive for "to stereotype people", Sammells argues, "is to control them, and this is precisely what Carr is attempting to do, to slot himself into a history which, apparently, has largely passed him by" (381). The drama presents artistic, political and social events which have similar and dissimilar perspectives. Their perspectival variations dialectically interact to mirror the reality of these events that occurred as if it were "yesteryear" (Travesties, 25). In this respect, Howard D. Pearce elucidates that "Stoppard's play (Travesties) is like a hall of mirrors, character mirroring character, art mirroring world, stage mirroring art reflecting artist reflecting world reflecting artist, present reflecting past" (1148).

Furthermore, plays mirror each other. Travesties mirrors The Real Thing both in terms of characters and in terms of themes and dramatic devices. Stoppard portrays his own vision of reality through the device of reflected images which is a manifestation of a trend employed since Plato and is emphasized in Abrams' notion of art as mirror. It widens the scope of understanding reality.

If in Travesties Henry Carr and Cecily collaborate to perform various acts that cope with the flux of time thus successfully create a real image of the world during the First World War, in The Real Thing, Henry and Annie manage to discuss the questions of art and life in ways that stimulate the audience to think and formulate a concept of what is real and what is unreal in art and life.

Activity which is the paradigmatic element of dramaturgic performance ensures that drama, as literary form, is instrumental in mirroring the spectator's, hence man's reality. It is consistent with Stoppard's views of the nature of dramatic performance in that it should not be imposed, but rather voluntarily chosen. And he emphasizes the spontaneity of dramatic performance as an inevitable ingredient for revealing and appraising the characters' identity, hence conveying their reality. This is dramatically portrayed in Tzara's own words in Travesties. "The clever people try to impose a design on the world", says Tzara, "and when it goes calamitously wrong they call it fate. In point of fact, everything is Chance, including design". And he continues in his dialogue with Carr to say that "the causes we know everything about depend on causes we know absolutely nothing about" (37).

To stress spontaneity as one of the shreds of his vision of reality, Stoppard deliberately implements chance and improvisation in dramatic action. This dramatic trait is emphasized by Jonathan Bennett in his article "Philosophy and Mr. Stoppard". "A real person can initiate actions, spontaneously". Bennett contends, "generating them out of his own needs

and wants and ideals and appetites, whereas the actor-the opposite of a person must act according to the given text" (1975, 11).

In Travesties, activity is stressed right from the start. In scene I, we see Gwen sitting with Joyce, who is occupied with books and papers. And while Lenin is writing, "Tzara finishes writing, then takes up the scissors and cuts the paper word by into his hand" (17) which symbolizes in a sense, the main source of artistic history. On the other hand, during the Lenins' conversation about the revolution in St. Petersburg, Joyce "stands up and begins to walk up and down searching his pockets for tiny scraps of paper on which he has previously written down things he may wish to use" (19).

Tzara's activity is manifest in his writing about "Dada" which means "down with reason, logic, causality, coherence, tradition, proportion sense and consequence. "(Travesties, 25). His artistic views imply ceaseless attempts to take hold upon reality. These attempts are quite conspicuous in his mental effort to reproduce historical data through memory. And diverse attitudes towards the genesis of war are crystal clear in the following dialogue between Carr and Tzara:

Tzara: But, my dear Henry . causality, is no longer fashionable owing to the war.

Carr: How illogical, since the war itself had causes. I forget what they were, but it was all in the papers at the time. Something about brave little Belgium wasn't it?

Tzara: Was it? I thought it was Serbia..

Carr: Brave little Serbia...? No, I don't think so. The newspapers would never have risked calling the British public to arms without a proper regard for succinct alliteration (36-7).

The dramatic tension of Travesties centers upon the discrepancies between Carr's various accounts of past events depending on this relative consideration of reality due to the subjective vision of his memory.

Wilde's theatrical influence upon Stoppard is quite evident in Stoppard's adoption of the theatrical device of mistaken identity. This is dramatically represented in relation to Henry Carr whose weak memory usually fails to identify names of characters. For instance, he calls Joyce by several names. The aim is to prompt the audience's sense of perception. In his introduction of Joyce' diverse character, Carr says: "He was Irish, of course. Though not actually from limerick - he was a Dublin man Joyce, everybody knows that ...(21). Again, Joyce is called "Janice" (51), "Phyllis" (53), "Deidre and Bridget" (95). The same thing applies to Lenin whose name is repeated. Carr says "Lenin as I knew Him". The Lenin I knew" (23). The stress of Lenin's name by capitalization is meant to figure out the historical weight of that figure which provides Travesties' dramatic structure with depth and continuance. Sudden shifts from one identity to another via constant changes of appearance, clothes and light tremendously add to the cryptic nature of the drama.

However, Travesties is not a mere dramatic reproduction of past historical incidents, for its essential role is to emphasize the epistemological function of the modern theatre, and, in that sense, in highlights the role of experimentation in dramatic representation through

borrowing works that belong to different worlds and adapting them to a world of its own. The same technique applies to The Real Thing which manages, through borrowing and echoing scenes from other plays, to stress the epistemic and experimental nature of the modern theatre which classes Stoppard with Wilde, Pirandello, Wilder and others. "To recognize the epistemological social function of art in general and of modern theatre in particular, Quigley states, "is to take the final step in understanding the role of experimentation in the modern theatre and of the worlds it creates" (53).

Like modern playwrights such as Ibsen, Strindberg, Pirandello, Chekhov and O'Neill and just as contemporary dramatists such as Bond, David Storey and Pinter, Stoppard implements the notion of the artist-protagonist as a dramatic emblem for both Travesties and The Real Thing. The aim is to stress the personal dilemma of the artist as a vehicle for realizing artistic creativity.

Travesties' reliability on history as a dialectic of opposing forces which nourishes universal human experiences and Stoppard's employment of real historical characters provide the drama with a powerful structure of reality. The dramatic representation of Lenin and Nadya, whose characters and their political activities are originally taken from historical sources, provides the play with various domains of reality. And the drama is full of contradictions due to the opposing images of reality, which create confusion impeding full understanding. This is, in a sense, due to Stoppard's imitation of other works of art. His mimetic method enables him to achieve the social function of the theatre. "Travesties' confused and confusing versions of reality" says Pearce, "are the result of the same

mimetic principle. As actor imitates character, play imitates action. As Carr refers himself to Algernon, Travesties refers itself to The Importance of Being Earnest" (1151).

Furthermore, just as Joyce's Ulysses is a pastiche of Homer's Odyssey, Travesties is an imitation of Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest. "Travesties", Pearce argues, "implies the openness and multiplicity of a mimetic art" (1152). Thus, Stoppard manages via interdisciplinarity to transcend the specific arena of literature to include such disciplines as philosophy, politics and sociology, hence tackling reality from various perspectives, thus achieving the essential function of the modern theatre which is stressed in the following words of Quigley:

> To recognize the multi-mimetic basis of art is also to recognize the multi-mimetic basis of our habitual notions of reality. This is not to make art and reality the same but to reconsider the nature of the oppositions between them, and to see once more that there are similarities as well as differences between opposing domains. And it is here that the link between mimesis and the theatre's social function leads beyond the realm of the theatre itself (52).

The terribly confusing images of the characters' identities in Travesties reflect their mistaken identity, and the quest for identity is one of the essential elements of looking for reality. For example, Carr's continual reference to the expression, "the other one", reveals his hesitant identity which leads to his inability to recognize his objective reality. Multiple images of character", Pearce contends, "cast identity into doubt. Henry Carr even mistakes himself for someone else" (1151). Commenting on that point, Pearce quotes Carr from Travesties: "the trousers, etcetra,

purchased by me for my performances as Henry - or rather -god damn it! "the other one" .. (1151).

Fact, according to Stoppard, have no meaning when they are isolated from their contexts. It is through verbal expression that they can attain their meanings. Thus, the external world provides us with information and it is through sense data and with the help of perception that reality is perceived.

In Travesties, Carr manages through individual perception to convey facts about war, art and politics. His realistic philosophy based on the analysis of sense perception and stimulated by ideas, enables him to differentiate between facts and ideas. He is able via the reactivation of his memory, to revitalize historical events through adding to and evaluating them, hence depicting them as creative attempts. "Carr's memory," Cooke argues, "does, in essence, function like art in that both are ideal and formal reconstructions of sensual experience outside of time" (531). Carr's memory is not just employed to reveal certain facts about the war but it is able to judge characters according to their appearance and behaviour. Therefore, in addition to activity and memory as revelatory devices of reality, Stoppard's dramatic design, manifested in such physical objects as colours and fancy dress and dramatically represented in role playing and story telling, reveals other dimensions of reality. Thus, clothing and colours, as parts of the dramatic structure have certain social, political and artistic implications. "If form predicates existence", Cooke argues, "and clothing is form then the existence of the individual depends upon clothing" (535). And in stressing the dramatic significance of physical

objects in connection with Lenin's character, Cooke states that "Stoppard stresses the fictional as well as the "real" properties of the physical image in his characterization of Lenin. Lenin's appearance as he begins his speech on artistic freedom, Cooke quotes Travesties to say: "balding, bearded in the three-piece suit" ...(563).

Thus, the way characters appear and dress accounts for their social, political and artistic attitudes. For instance, the character of Joyce has several meanings throughout the play. First, he is the ill-dressed "...Mr. Joyce, Irish writer, mainly of limericks, christened James Augusta, a little known fact" (Travesties, 42). Also clothing and characters' costumes as indicators of particular historical, artistic and social ideas are to be traced throughout Travesties. For example, "War is capitalism with the gloves off" ...(39)..."infantile sexuality in Khaki trews", and .... "The collective unconscious in a tin hat?" (40). And to reify the news of war, Carr explains:

> I was in saville Row when I heard the news, talking to the head clutter at Drewitt and Madge in a hounds - tooth check slightly flared behind the knee, quite unusual. Old Drewitt, or Madge, came in and told me. Never trusted the Hun, I remarked (28).

Carr proceeds to proclaim that he was there "in the mud and blood of a foreign field, unmatched by anything in the whole history of human carnage, Ruined several pairs of trousers" (37).

Thus, form suggests a meaning of its own which adds to the content which works dialectically in the same way history moves and advances via the clash of opposing forces that the drama reveals. Central to the

treatment of reality in Travesties is Stoppard's implementation of colours and appearance as a medium of portraying the reality of characters. This notion is historically related to the 19th century literature's focus on the physical appearance of characters as indications of their ways of thinking and style of life. A practical example of the impact of the physical appearance of characters upon the reader's own interpretation of their reality and which Stoppard made use of in Travesties and The Real Thing is found in Auerbach's stress of Balzac's minute description of Madam Vanquer's appearance. Auerbach maintains:

> The entire description ... is directed to the mimetic imaginations of the reader, to his memory pictures of similar persons and similar milieux which he may have seen; the thesis of the stylistic unity of the milieu, which includes the people in it, is not established rationally but is presented as a striking and immediately apprehended state of things, purely suggestively, without any proofs (471).

In Travesties, the dramatic dialogue may lend itself to various interpretations and there is a constant dislocation as to the names of places, characters and works of art for example, "Hans Arps" is referred to as "Jean Arp" (37) and Ulysses as "Elasticated Bloomers" (22).

In his emphasis on clothing, on colours, on the Wildean fancy dress, and in his repeated use of epigrammatic speeches in Travesties and The Real Thing, Stoppard shows his indebtedness to Wilde. An apparent example of Stoppard's use of the epigrammatic style is in Carr's dialogue with his manservant Bennett:

Carr: I'm not sure that I approve of your taking up this modish novelty of "free association", Bennett. I realize that it is all the rage in Zurich-even in the most respectable salons to try to follow a conversation nowadays is like reading every other line of a sonnet-but if the servant classes are going to ape the fashion of society, the end can be ruin and decay.

Benett: I'm sorry, sir. It is only that Mr. Tzara being an artist.

Carr: I will not have you passing moral judgement on my friends. If Mr. Tzara is an artist that is his misfortune (30-1).

In an interview with Ronald Hayman about the nature of the dramatic style in Travesties, which, though it seems simple, has different levels of understanding, Stoppard states:

> ... I just wanted to dislocate the audience's assumptions every now and again about what kind of style the play was going to be in. dislocation of an audience's assumptions is an important part of what I like to write. It operates in different ways (143).

Dislocation of "the audiences' assumptions", employed by Stoppard, results in contradictions in its attitudes towards art, politics and society. These contradictions lead to various discussions that reveal different perspectives of reality. For example, while the function of art, according to Tzara, is "scandal, provocation, and more outrage.." (60), art, according to Carr is "to beautify existence" (37), whereas the basic function of art, according to Lenin, is social and political criticism (85). Thus, Tzara, Lenin and Joyce could be regarded as composers of reality in various fields: in art, politics and society. And facts about war and politics

are given shape through their endless debates, However, "Carr's failure to reproduce exactly the Zurich of his younger days", says Cooke, "links him rather more closely to Stoppard's point that art and history are creative endeavors, the products of "makers" (531).

Evaluating the dramatic method Stoppard followed in Travesties, Rodney Simard states:

> In Travesties, Stoppard takes on the major theories of life and art in the twentieth-century and does much to illuminate and reconcile them in the dramatization of ideology, both in the content and form of his play. This is an audacious goal, but one that he achieves admirably and once having done it he moved into a new phase of his career, with parallel but decidedly different concerns. Travesties will undoubtedly continue to delight and baffle its audience because of the fantastic scope of its concerns. Yet it can still be approached and apprehended as simply as the art it explicates ... (In Harry, 1988, 189-90).

Thus, Stoppard's treatment of reality in Travesties is not confined to the revelation of reality about historical and artistic facts, for he is not bound to prove their validity but rather concentrated, in his treatment of art, politics and society, on creating various levels of understanding through dramatic dislocation, role playing and improvisation. In that sense, Stoppard could be grouped with Pirandello, who is very much concerned about the question of reality and the plausibility of identity.

In Travesties, both Carr and Cecily stand as men for all seasons. In relation to time, place and action, the two characters embody, via perpetual change of appearance, clothes and even characters, various perspectives of

reality. In the same way, in The Real Thing, Henry, Annie and Billy change their acting roles and clothes in performing scenes from other plays.

Light, music and dance are theatrical devices used by Stoppard to suggest certain dramatic implications. Towards the end of Travesties, the scene of music and dance is very suggestive. Tzara dances with Gwen, Carr with Cecily and both Joyce and Bennett dance separately. And as light fades on the character of Carr in the end, he states:

> ... I learned three things in Zurich during the war. I wrote them down. Firstly, you're either a revolutionary or you're not, and if you're not you might as well be an artist as anything else. Secondly, if you can't be an artist, you might as well be a revolutionary ... I forget the third thing (98-99).

When Stoppard was asked in an interview with the Theatre Quarterly in 1974, whether the terms "artist" and "revolutionary" in Travesties are synonymous, he replied:

> The play puts the question in a more extreme form. It asks whether an artist has to justify himself in political terms at all. For example if Joyce were alive today, he would say Juntas may come and Juntas may go but Homer may go for ever. And when he was alive he did say that the history of Ireland, troubles and all, was justified because it produced him and he produced Ulysses. Okay. So clearly one has now to posit a political prisoner taking comfort from the thought that at least he is in the country of Joyce, or of Homer and to ask oneself whether Joyce, in more terms, was myopic or had better vision than lesser men (16).

The Real Thing, Stoppard's most representative drama illuminating his concept of reality, tackles such themes as love, marriage, infidelity and dramatic writing. In its adoption of art and life, the drama echoes Henry James' short story: "The Real Thing" in which "two pathetic old fashioned individuals", says Scruton, "(confident at least of their reality since it is the product of social order) which they have yet to question) are forced by penury to pose for a painter. In the glare of art their social guarantee, and hence their reality, evaporates. Only anxiety remains" (46). According to Crump, Stoppard, like James, "recognizes that the phrase real thing" has different meanings when applied to life and to artistic representations of life" (In Harry, 1988, 320).

The real problem of Henry, the artist-protagonist in The Real Thing, lurks, according to Scruton "in the dilemma posed by his (Henry's) art, not knowing whether his experience is the creature or the creator of his plays" (46). The orthodoxy of the drama lies in its attempt to meticulously reveal the nature of reality in love in connection with artificial relationships, in "an age," says Delaney, "that demands disposable relationships, pragmatic alliances. In art The Real Thing, says Delaney, "endeavours to distinguish the authentic from the propagandistic imitations" (45).

The Real Thing aims at narrowing the gap between art and life and it endeavours to relate the subjective experience of the artist in connection with art, love and politics to the objective events of life.

Reviewing The Real Thing, Richard Findlater states:

> On the surface, it (The Real Thing) appears initially as a retreat into Noel Cowardy naturalism: surprisingly in a writer who has vigorously attacks the "fallacy" of naturalism and its consequences in bad theatre", bad thinking and bad feeling". But the orthodoxy of form and content is ... deceptive; and he again used the distorting mirror or theatrical pastiche, and the echoes of play within a play, to mix reflections of actuality and illusion, juggle with ideas and explore the relationship of art to other kinds of reality (26).

Stoppard's characters act two roles. First, they perform their original role in the drama. Second, they replay certain scenes from other plays, and it is through the interaction between their original part and their acting roles in other plays that the opportunity for dramatizing the similarities and differences between actual reality and imaginative reality is discussed. It is also through the fusion of these roles with their actual experiences that the reality of art and life emerges.

The reality of life is perceived as a series of improvisation rather than an assigned act. Thus, by creating more than one acting situation for the character through dramatic dislocation, Stoppard manages to create flagrant metaphysical tension which stimulates the audiences' sense of perception by involving them intellectually as well as viscerally in dramatic action. Both actors and audiences are involved consciously or unconsciously in dramatic action. In this way, The Real Thing displays that reality can never be fully grasped for it is always in flux.

Describing Stoppard's plays as "audiovisual metaphysics" in which characters do not develop in relation to each other, Scruton criticizes Stoppard's theatricalization of characters. He states:

> He (Stoppard) strings characters like puppets on a line of repatee: his masters are Wilde and Shaw and his ideal of dialogue is an exchange not of feelings, but of epigrams. The Real Thing is never in his words, which contain only the idea of it, in the form of brilliantly staged metaphysical conundrums. The result is of course good theatre ... but it is the effect of theatre - a kind of theatresque - and an effect without a cause can not be described as quite the real thing (47).

However, a meticulous reader of The Real Thing would ally with Delaney's view against Scruton's charge that the Stoppardian characters do not develop in relation to each other. Delaney rightly says that Stoppard's plays" hinges precisely on the transformation, the development, the growth we see in Annie" (57). Also, there is a metamorphosis in the character of Henry and his enlightenment through painful experiences.

The Real Thing widens the idea and deepens the scope of Travesties' concern with the relationship between art and life. Just as Travesties is "a hall of mirrors" where everything mirrors something else and shows itself from its different perspectives, The Real Thing, according to Zeifman, is "a two-way mirror" (145). It proves that the moment reality begins to merge and overlap is a moment of questioning which is The Real Thing. This is achieved through a direct correspondence between the on-stage and off-stage worlds and it is through the panoply of Stoppard's dramatic style that the two worlds are mingled in a debatable way that

blurs the lines of communication between what is real and what is not. "In mirroring scene against scene", Anthony Jenkins states, "Stoppard not only aims to point up the odd falsity of "real" life when compared with art's convincing fable; he also surveys a no-man's-land between the two, where genuine and pictured feeling coalesce" (162).

The Real Thing, which opens in a Pirandellian dramatic way, echoes Ibsen's A Doll's House. The subject is marriage and the collapse of married relationship. It begins with Charlotte's entrance after her supposed trip to Switzerland. Before the door slams, her husband Max is seen sitting alone ransacking her belongings. He accidentally find her passport, which means that she has not gone away.

The following dialogue shows a conjugal crisis between Max and Charlotte, which will lead to the collapse of their marital relationship.

Charlotte	: What were you looking for?
Max	: Your passport.
Charlotte	: It's about the last place I would have looked.
Max	: It was.
Charlotte	: Why were you looking for it?
Max	: I didn't' know it was going to be your passport. It you see what I mean.
Charlotte	: I think I do. You go through my things when I'm away? (Pause. Puzzled) Why?
Max	: I like it when I found nothing. You should have just put it (your passport) in your handbag. We'd

still be an ideal couple. So to speak.

Charlotte : Wouldn't you have checked to see if it had been stamped?

Max : That's very good point. I notice that you never went to Amsterdam when you went to Amsterdam. I must say I take my hat off to you, coming home with Rembrandt place mat for your mother. It's those little touches that life adultery out of the moral arena and to make it a matter of style (1982, 13)

The audience's imaginative perception is stimulated by providing them with objective events that might prompt them to ask the following questions: Where did Charlotte go since she left her passport in her recipe drawer? And if she probably did not travel, with whom did she go? This first scene, which echoes the Pirandellian dramatic method, is typically Stopprdian in that it nudges the audiences to question reality through debates.

To cast doubt into the audience's mind as to the possibility of Henry being in love with Charlotte, Charlotte is seen, in scene II, wearing Henry's dressing gown. However, Henry proceeds in a way as to show that what we saw in Scene I was not the real life but an act from Henry's play, The House of Cards, in which Max and Charlotte are mere actors.

The effective role of the artist in transforming actual reality into artistic imaginative forms lies, according to Stoppard, in the artist's aesthetic potentials to prod the world to change. To achieve the dynamic role of art in changing reality, the artist should be quiet conscious of the

equilibrium that should exist between the world of art and life. In this connection, Delaney expounds:

> There are points at which the aesthetic intersects the epistemological and even the ethical. Distortions in one plane can lead to distortions in the other plane. Abuse of words in writing can lead to a warped vision of the real world, a blend toward seeing justice as fraud, property as theft, patriotism as propaganda, religion as a contrick. And such skewed perception of the real world can lead to the acting out of prejudice, to behaviour in the ethical plane which is like wise skewed. Thus clarity of artistic vision is not finally divorced from accuracy of epistemological perception. Writing aright ... can nudge human beings a little toward acting aright in the real world (51).

In The Real Thing, Stoppard implements the technique of dislocation which aims at destroying the image of the theatre as illusion. As the drama develops, we realize that Max and Charlotte are not the real adulterers. Henry has an affair with Annie, who is married to Max. Again it is possible to agree with Zeifman who asked: Is their love "the real thing"? (140). And when the subject of love is tackled in dramatic writing, what is "the real thing"?

Throughout the play, no single answer is given to the questions that deal with love, marriage and the theatre. "Henry presents a chimerical version", says Jenkins, "of his creator's public self and behind that lies a vulnerability, a rawness which Stoppard had not felt able to expose - and mock - since "Reunion" ... (171-2).

In The Real Thing, scenes are borrowed from other plays in order to testify the reality of love. According to Stoppard, all plays of love are

artificial, for they do not show how people in love really behave. Abuse words reflect their warped vision of love. "Stoppard leads us along these various paths", says Jenkins, "to show how we never can arrive at the real thing, the experience itself" (169). And in spite of the artificiality of writing "playwrights continue to write about love", says Jenkins, "tying it down with words and shaping it to the two-hour traffic on the stage" (169) which is theatricalized in the words of Charlotte:

> Charlotte ... Having all the words to come back with just as you need them. That's the difference between plays and real life - thinking time, time to get your bottle back. "Must say, I take my hat off to you, coming home with Rembrandt place mats for your mother. You don't really think that if Henry caught me out with a lover, he'd sit around being witty about place like a pick-a-sticks. His sentence structure would go to pot, closely followed by his sphincter. You know that, don't you, Henry? Henry? No answer. Are you there, Henry? Say something witty (22).

With love scenes from Ford's Tis Pity She's a Whore and Strindberg's Miss Julie, Stoppard dislocates the dramatic structure of The Real Thing to define his concept about the reality of love. Acting a scene from Miss Julie, in Act I of The Real Thing, Annie is seen memorizing the lines she will act which implies the artificiality of love when words about it are memorized before performance. And while Annie is seen playing Julie, Billy is replaying Jean.

Dislocation is also employed by quoting Ford's Tis Pity She's a Whore. The aim is to reveal who is the "real" whore? Annie performs the role of Annabella in Ford's play. Do the image of Annabella as an actress in the play and her being a whore predominate? Or does the image of Annie replaying Annabella prevail? These juxtapositions and contrasts are emphasized to reveal the real and unreal husband's reactions to adultery as well as unravel whether art is more real than life.

The following dialogue between Annie and Henry reveals the reactions of real husbands and wives towards adultery.

Annie: (Hardening) I did tell you. I spent the morning talking to Billy in a station cafeteria instead of coming straight home to you and I fibbed about the train because that seemed like infidelity - but all you want to know is did I sleep with him first?

Henry: Yes. Did you?

Annie: No.

Henry: Did you want to?

Annie: Oh, for God's sake!

Henry: You can ask me.

Annie: I prefer to respect your privacy.

Henry: I have none. I disclaim it. Did you?

Annie: What about your degnity then?

Henry: You'd behave better than me. I don't believe in behaving well. I don't' believe in debonair

> relationships. "How's your lover today Amanda? "I believe in mess, tears, pain, self abasement, loss of self-respect, nakedness. Not caring doesn't seem much different from not loving. Did you? (74).

In The Real Thing, the reality of the plot, which seems cyclical rather than progressive, results from the continual interactions between the main characters whose identities change in disquieting ways and through their acting roles in scenes from other plays. The fragmentation of the plot which has resulted from acting a play-within-a play aims to isolate as well as alienate us from the text, thus providing us with the opportunity to reflect on the entire structure. Characters and the values they adopt appear more real than the roles they perform in other plays.

The shift from blank verse to modern language as manifested in excerpts from 'Tis Pity She's a Whore emphasizes the theme of artificiality versus reality in terms of language; for blank verse appears quite alien to modern sensibility. However, verse is used in The Real Thing to extend and enhance the audience's emotional involvement in dramatic action, thus appearing more real in performance. Commenting on the dramatic language of both Ford's and Stoppard's plays, Zeifman states:

> ... both the play (Tis Pity) itself and the circumstances in which it appears in his (Stoppard's) text are clearly seen as artificial not "the real thing". The language Ford's lovers speak is blank verse, a language totally alien to contemporary life, in addition, both Annie and Billy are known to be acting when they speak those words,

> Presumably, only the most unsophisticated theatre-goer confuses the identity of actor and role. When Annie kisses Billy, for example, it is Annabella kissing Giovanni: The gesture has nothing to do with how Annie "really" feels about Billy. By the same token, Annie's playing a "whore" ... obviously does not imply that she herself is a whore (144).

Dramatizing the artist's dilemma due to his inability to project basic human feelings into the form of words that would guarantee the reality of the individual whose experience represents the very core of reality, Henry states:

> Loving and being loved is unliterary. It's happiness in banality and lust. It makes me nervous to see three quarters of a page and no writing in it. I mean I talk better than this (41).

To discuss artificiality versus reality in terms of love, Stoppard borrows from Strindberg's Miss Julie where Annie and Henry replay the roles of Julie and Jean. Here, the audiences are confronted with two characters that perform a love scene in a different play. They vacillate between two different dramatic worlds possible to urge the following questions: Is their love real or not? Is it real on-stage or off-stage? it is noticed that during their rehearsal in Glasgow, both Annie and henry began a love affair. But Henry is not capable of confessing his love to Annie. Therefore, he finds in playing the role of Jean and opportunity to express his real love to Annie.

Considering himself the chief guardian of language, one who should protect and correct other people's mistakes, and questioning his own linguistic criteria of dramatic writing, Henry disvalues the play of Brodie. Annie's reaction to Henry's attitude is revealed in her dialogue with him:

> Annie: You want to keep it sacred, special, not something, anybody can do. Some of us have it, some of us don't. We write, you get written about. What gets you about Brodie is he does not know his place you say he can't write like a headmaster saying you can't come in here without a tie. Because he can't put words together.
>
> Henry: It's traditionally considered advantageous for a writer.
>
> Annie: He's not a writer. He's a convict. You're a writer. You write because you're a writer .... (52).

The artificiality of Annie's and Henry's performance is quite apparent in their mechanical acting of Julie's and Jean's parts in Strindberg's drama. However, they find it appropriate to reveal their real affections towards each other. During their dramatic performance, both characters express their fidelity and sincere love to each other. In Scene Four of Act (I) the following dialogue reveals the spontaneous flow of their "real" feelings:

> Henry: I love love. I love having a lover and being one. The insularity of passion. I love it. I love the way it blurs the distinction between all the people who aren't one's lover. Only two kinds of presence in the world. There's you and there is them. I love you so.

Annie: I love you so, Hen.

(They kiss. The alarm on Henry's wristwatch goes off. They separate.) (45).

The alarm on Henry's wristwatch is dramatically suggestive. "That alarm" says Zeifman, "startles us - not simply because an unexpected sound is breaking a tender love scene, but because the fact that it breaks the scene emphasizes that what we have been watching is indeed a scene: a theatrical moment deliberately created and then shattered" (146).

To stress the artist's enlightenment through experience which in many ways stands for that of the dramatist himself, Henry states:

> There is, I suppose, a world of objects which have a certain form, like this coffee mug. I turn it, and it has no handle. I tilt it, and it has no cavity. But there is something real here which is always a mug with a handle. I suppose. But politics, justice, patriotism they aren't even like coffee mugs. There's nothing real there separate of our perception of them. So if you try to stick labels on them; "farce," fraud, condemned, and try to change them; you'll get frustrated, and frustration will finally make you violent (54).

The treatment of artificiality versus reality in The Real Thing is not confined to the themes of love, marriage and infidelity, but it extends to dramatic composition. Stoppard seems to doubt the dramatist's ability to present a real image of love that could be captured on the stage. "Stoppard has provided himself with an obviously self-referential vehicle", says Leslie Thomson, "that permits him to dramatize the subjective experience of love and question the ability of language to convey it objectively" (537).

This point is reified in the following words by Henry which express the artist's crisis in attempting to find appropriate words that would express love objectively.

> Henry: I don't know how to write love. I try to write it properly, and it just comes out embarrassing. It's either childish or it's rude. [....] Perhaps I should write it completely artificial. Blank verse. Poetic imagery [...] I don't know. Loving and being loved is unliterary. It's happiness expressed in banality and lust (40-1).

Based on dramatic dislocation and endless debates, the form of The Real Thing, like that of Travesties, mirrors its theme. Just as in Travesties, the questions of art, politics and society are the subjects of endless controversies, in The Real Thing the themes of love, marriage, infidelity and dramatic writing are set in various debates. Both plays implement mirror images that reflect each other. While the opening scene of Travesties shows that the seemingly unreal is real, the opening of The Real Thing proves that the seemingly real appear to be imaginary, a scene from a play within the play. Like Travesties, which stresses the permanence of art, The Real Thing emphasizes the inevitability of the choice of real words to reveal the reality of things. To discuss reality both plays focus on art which should be thoroughly aesthetic and devoid of any propagandistic aspirations.

Just as Tzara in Travesties is unable to change art into something by simply abusing the word art, so in The Real Thing, the artist-protagonist, Henry, though he is enlightened by passing via various

experiences both in terms of art and life, can not alter the concept of justice, politics or patriotism.

The metaphor of the artist as protagonist occupies a central position in Travesties and The Real Thing. While Henry Carr in Travesties questions art, politics and society implementing his memory, Henry in The Real Thing ceaselessly struggles to find out objective tools for judging the real and the unreal in art and life. Every perception of reality in The Real Thing enfolds the other to provide an image of reality.

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The Mysteries of Identity In Brian Friel's
Philadelphia, Here I Come! And The Freedom of the City

Although a number of books, studies and articles have discussed in diverse disciplines, the concepts of art, identity and society, this study focuses on the mysteries of identity in connection with sociological and cultural experiences in two of Brian Friel major plays: Philadelphia, Here I Come! And The Freedom of the City. (1) While the first gained Friel's international dramatic reputation, the second indicates the emotional, intellectual, cultural and theatrical growth of his theatrical vision.

Reviewing studies that have dealt with Friel's theatrical world, it has been observed that they have mostly focused on such theatrical formative influences on Friel as Chekhov and Beckett, on family themes and on the nature of his treatment of the protagonist. This research centres on Irish identity and its mysteries in the two plays in question, stressing the mysterious attachment to the Irish land and to history.

Motivation for treating the mysteries of identity within the Irish dramatic context is due to the sociopsychological and political nature of Ireland which indulges in what is mysterious, ritualistic and legendary.

The persistent quest for identity in literature with the purpose of exploring its mysteries is due to the apparently inevitable dislocation of the individual from family and society. This bleak world of the individual results in a general sense of estrangement and a remarkable feeling of loneliness. In his book The Mysteries of Identity, Robert Langbaum observes that "personal relations become increasingly difficult as society loses the confidence to tell us what these relations ought to be" (2). He

also notes that the negative impact of society upon the individual is remarkably reflected in the treatment of the self in literature. Langbaum maintains:

> The declining vitality of the self in literature has accompanied a declining confidence in society, in the spiritual power of nature, and in the organic connection of the self with nature. It has accompanied a loss of confidence in the individual effort due to mass production, mass markets, mass media, to increasing urbanization, specialization and to the increasing alienation of the self" (3).

Langbaum continues to equate identity with humanity and observes that "literature since the romanticists had been concerned to salvage our humanity against the modern conditions that would turn us into machines" (4).

In her book Mystery and Manners, Flannery O'Connor deals with gift and mystery synonymously proposing that a gifted writer "has to suffer certain deprivation in order to use his gift with integrity" (5). She proceeds to state:

> Art is a virtue of the practical intellect, and the practice of any virtue demands a certain aesceticism and a very definite leaving-behind of the niggardly part of the ego (6).

Considering the dialectical relationship between art and the self, O'Conner sees that "no art is sunk in the self, but rather, in art the self becomes self-forgetful in order to meet the demands of the thing seen and the thing being made" (7).

According to David Grossvogel, mystery is an unendurable sense of void that necessitates figures to fill it. Therefore, literature inevitably assists in filling that sense of void through firing the individual's imaginative faculty. Identifying the sociopsychlogical role of literature in nourishing the individual's mind to cope with that sense of waste, Grossvogel maintains:

> Unable either to grasp or to abandon mystery he (the individual) resorts to a familiar fraud he attempts to absorb mystery in speculation; he invents incarnations with which he can cope. Literature plays a part in that process, and most literature is tinctured to some extent with the effects of that concern (8).

Essential to the treatment of identity and fundamental to the consideration of the inward and outward forces that have formulated Friel's characters and their obvious social unrest is the analysis of man's mental apparatus with its elements of the id, the ego and the superego. If the id represents all the deeply repressed feelings and desires, the ego, according to Freud, has two major senses. One is bodily and the other works as a safety valve that organizes the elements outside and inside the body. In his The Ego and The Id, Freud maintains the instrumental role of the ego in its relation to the Id on the one hand and the real external world on the other. "the ego represents what we call reason and sanity", Freud claims, "in contrast to the id which contains the passions" (9).

In Notes From Underground, Dostoevsky delineated his underground antihero as a humanist figure who destructively acts against his own personal interests for the sake of achieving freedom, justice and equality (10). This individualistic merit of the antihero demands, according

to Erik Erikson, liberation from tribal and national identities that would widen the scope of choices (11). In his book Life History And The Historical Moment. Erikson discusses identity from its psychological perspective maintaining that there is some sort of complementarity between the social, psychological and historical dimensions of identity. He states:

> The "socio" part of identity ... must be accounted for in that communality within which an individual finds himself. No ego is an island to itself. Throughout life the establishment and maintenance of that strength which can reconcile discontinuities and ambiguities depends on the support of parental as well as communal model (12).

Stressing the confusion of identity which in one way or another is a typical feature of the Frielian character, Erikson classifies the sociopsychological identity into three orders: one is "somatic" in which "an organism seeks to maintain its integrity in a continuous reciprocal adaptation of the milieu interieur and other organisms" (13). "The personal order", says Erikson, "that is the integration of "inner" and "outer" world in individual experience and behaviour" (14). "The social order" can be achieved via "personal organisms sharing a geographic historical setting" (15).

Emigration which constitutes the pivotal theme in Friel's Philadelphia is defined by Erikson as being "a hard and a heartless matter, in terms of what is abandoned in the old country and what is usurped in the new one" (16). It is a sort of "cruel survival in identity terms" (17). Emigration to America seems to be an Irish social cult due to the hysterical infatuation of all what is American.

The real failures and the complete frustrations of the Irish individual, according to Friel, are due to his inability to create a kind of social identity within a framework of a definite form of real personal identity because of the sociopsychological and cultural confusions. In this connection, Erving Goffman defines social identity saying:

> By "social identity", I mean the broad social categories ... to which an individual can belong and be seen as belonging: age-grade, sex, class, regiment, and so forth. By personal identity, "I mean the unique organic continuity imputed to each individual, this established through distinguishing marks such as names and appearance (18).

The constant political and violent strife that aim at attaining a unified image of Irish identity govern Friel's theatrical vision. According to him, if the individual has no place in society he has no identity. Hence, identity is central to Friel's plays whose characters are socially depressed and politically dislocated. In this sense, critics described Friel as the Irish Chekhov due to his emphasis on the problem of the poor and on their identity. For instance, Richard Pine states:

> Friel's Chekovian world combines a instance on the importance of the everyday experience with the "if only" of the theatre of hope. In his work ...therefore, we find an acute awareness of the tragicomic, precisely because the outsider, the deviant, the wanderer, the reel, are central rather than peripheral, to the way in which Irish society, like Russian society, exercises itself (19).

Due to their adherence to the Yeatsian and Joycean concepts of reviving and revising the Irish past history and identity, such contemporary Irish writers of the mid-fifties generation as Fintan O'Toole, John Waters,

Dermot Bolger and others have attempted to dig the bogs of the unconscious to make sense of the Irish past history for the privilege of their own generation. They have sought to remember their cultural and literary heritage, with the intention of keeping their heads, and without losing their individuality or freedom. They have also remained quite loyal to the identity of their country for they have constantly been obsessed by the inevitability of going back to the Irish roots for the purpose of clarity and better understanding of the present (20).

In his The Picador Book of Irish Fiction, Bolger explicates his own concept of Irish history criticizing it as being fragmentary and discontinuous. His general feeling, as an Irish, is that of loss and insecurity due to the image of Ireland which is "something broken and insecure", says Bolger, "a post-colonial society which remained in spirit part of the one time mother country, and part of America, and part of its own inventions" (21).

Friel's theatrical vision of Irish identity grown from social to national and then to cultural identity. The Frielian dramatic characters suffer from identity crisis due to their dislocation as individuals. Their decision to leave their homeland is not so much related to their disloyalty to their cultural roots as to their persistent quest for internationalist identity.

Although they are dissimilar as to the nature of their treatment of identity, Philadelphia and The Freedom share similar theatrical devices of dislocation, rituals, music, songs, loud speakers, beamed searchlights, the device of the double and suggestive colours. The dramatic spectacle is the

ghettos of Ireland which have been populated by people "for whom vagrancy and exile", says Seamus Deane, "have become inescapable conditions about which they can do nothing but talk, endlessly and eloquently and usually to themselves" (22). This is the case of Public and Private Gar the twin protagonist in Philadelphia and Lily, Michael and Skinner in The Freedom.

To stress the importance of identity and the awareness of sociopolitical, cultural and national dimensions for the active participation of the individual in changing and improving the human condition, Friel focuses on personal identity and its emotional sense in relation to individual families and to society at large.

While the dramatic setting of Philadelphia, like that of Living Quarters, of Translations and of The Communication Cord is the village of Ballybeg with its ghetto miseries, the dislocated world of Derry represents the dramatic spectacle of The Freedom. In Philadelphia conflict vacillates between the characters' attachment to their provincial roots and their yearning for freedom via their quest for internationalist identity. The ambivalent mood that characterizes Philadelphia and The Freedom is a blend of complicated socio-psychological states of the characters' minds which viably result in rapid change from the comic to the tragic and vice versa.

Philadelphia is divided into three episodes. The third is divided into two parts. The play signals eight hours in the life of Gar O'Donnell, telescoping the inward workings of his mind on the eve of his emigration to America. Gar's O'Donnell, telescoping the inward workings of his mind

on the eve of his emigration to America. Gar's indecisiveness to leave his homeland, windowed father and love is due to his socio-cultural attachment to his Irish roots. Throughout the drama, Gar occasionally repeats the opening lines of Edmund Burke's famous apostrophe to the ancient regime of France which was written in 1790. Gar's frequent reference to Emund Bruke symbolizes a vision of glory and beauty that he imagines and it could be achieved through memory that would help re-establish a sense of positive relationship between Gar and his father. Gar states:

> The music says ... that once upon a time a boy and his father sat in a blue boat on a lake on an afternoon a great beauty happened, a beauty that has haunted the boy eversince because he wonders now did it really take place or did he imagine it? There are only the two of us, he says, each of us is all the other has; and why can we not even look at each other? (23)

This reaction symbolizes that the world Gar is trying to own is "remnant of a past civilization". Seamus Deane notes "and that the new world, however vulgar it may be, is that of Philadelphia and the Irish Americans" (24).

In Philadelphia, Friel employs the dramatic device of the double in which two actors stand for one man who is a composite of diverse mysteries which can be conceived through manners. Describing that device at the outset of the play, Friel states:

> The two Gars, Public Gar and Private Gar are two views of the one man. Public Gar is the Gar that people see, talk to, talk about. Public Gar is the unseen man, within the conscience, the alter ego, the secret thoughts, the id.

> Private Gar the spirit, the invisible to everybody, always. Nobody except Public Gar hears him talk. But even look at him. One can look at one's alter ego. (25)

The two Gars: Public and Private stand in a sense for the dialectical relationship between the id with all its repressed feelings and desires and the ego which disciplines the id with all its desires and the super ego with its societal rules. Gar, in many ways, is "a modern case of alienation", says Seamus Deane, "he is narcissistic in the sense that he is driven back in upon the resources of the self" (26). Describing Public Gar's sociopsychological state in the opening scenes of <u>Philadelphia</u>, Maxwell states that Gar "is exuberant, in a mood of release, to an extend feigned, a sort of whistling in the dark, but natural generosity of spirit" (27). His inability to decide is dramatized through rituals which are based on repetition and according to George O'Brien is "an important dimension of Friel's theatre in bringing into being the epiphanous effect of crystallization" (28) "Gar's dialogues", Maxwell states, "range between their requiem for the dead mother" and he conceives of Gar as "a celebrated footballer or musician" (29) Gar's elegiac memory comes as Maxwel notes "out of the buffoonery" (30).

Throughout <u>Philadelphia</u>, Private urgently motivates Public Gar to stand for his decision to emigrate. Hence, he symbolizes Public Gar's id nagging all the time to persuade him to achieve his innermost desire of financial success. Private says:

> Get a grip on yourself. Don't be a damned sentimental fool! (signs)
>
> Philadelphia, here I come! (31).

Interrogated by Private Gar about his decision to leave Ireland, Public Gar reveals his agony in the following dialogue:

PRIVATE	: You are fully conscious of al the consequences of your decision?
PUBLIC	: Yes sir.
PRIVATE	: Of leaving the country of your birth the land of the curlew and the snip, the Aran sweater and the Irish Sweep stakes? (32)

The repetitive use of language, the constant confrontations of the two Gars and that sense of indecisiveness and heaviness ensure the circularity of Philadelphia's plot. However, the dramatic significance of Philadelphia is not implied in its circular plot, but in "its delicate montage", says Maxwell, "of past and present experiences and feelings (33) Public Gar is seen living within the present of this life with his father. Their relationship dominates the dramatic action of Episode I which incarnates Gar's attempts to liberate himself from his social and national roots.

Boyle the school master passed through a bitter experience abroad. It proved to be a failure. The following dialogue between Boyle and the two Gars reveals Gar's identity crisis:

POYLE	: Good luck, Gareth.
BUBLIC	: Thanks, Master.
POYLE	: Forget Ballybeg and Ireland.
BUBLIC	: It's easier said.

POYLE	: Perhaps you'll write me.
BUBLIC	: I will indeed.
POYLE	: Yes, the first year, may be the second I'll miss you, Gar.
PRIVATE	: For God's sake get a grip on yourself.
PUBLIC	: Thanks for the book and for (BOYLE embraces PUBLIC briefly).
PRIVATE	: Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! (34)

The failure of Boyle "reaches into emotions", says Maxwell, not even alluded to by the words" (35) And Private is there to resist Public's sense of national belonging. The two Gars feel at one when they both sing the same song of Fhildelphia. Yet ritualistic gestures implied in the repetition of the song symbolizes, in a sense, a mysterious agreement between the inside and outside of Gr. The general mood of the plays is that of continuance which is achieved through rituals.

Ritualistic incantations provide a sense of heaviness, of no change and of fixity. Time past and time present are mixed up in a way that one could feel the stasis of time as there is no progression. Characters' lives are subject to contradiction and their actions take place accidentally and plot concentrates on characters' private lives rather than on their social practices. People, like Boyle, the boys, Kate Dogan, the father and even housekeeper, Madge, come either to say farewell to Gar or to view his decision.

In Philadelphia, characters react ritualistically to externalize Gar's innermost desires, mysteries and fears. According to Maxwell Madge "represents something of life he (Gar) is leaving, devoted without much return of gratitude to her sister's family and their children" (36). It is Madge who relates to Gar the story of his mother who died three days after his birth and who, unlike his father, is "wild and young". Gar shows a contradictory attitude towards his father and in pointing out his ambivalent character, Maxwell states:

> Towards his father Gar has not a resolved attitude, but incessantly fluctuating responses. He depises, loves, tortures, disregards S.B. On only one occasion and ever that is doubtful, did their individual tunes as Friel has put it, strike the same key and so make possible harmony (37).

To reveal the mysteries of his characters' identities, Friel focuses on their inner lives rather than on their social existence. He purposefully chooses youthful characters since youth is always vital, active and in a state of constant flux that allied with the status quo in Ireland. In this connection, George O'Brien states:

> His (Friel's) youth typically offer a focus on private dramas, the dramas of all our lives, rather than the sociological and cultural problems of temporary members of social caste (38).

While Friel's concept of identity takes social and national form in Philadelphia, it takes a socio-political shape in The Freedom. Though characters seem submissive, their quest for freedom is quite conspicuous. These forms of identity are dramatized through role-playing rituals cross-talk displaced voices and colour. For instance, the introduction of Gar's

bedroom in low dark colour symbolizes mystery and estrangement. The appearance of the Mayor's parlour in darkness, where the three Derry civilians are shot concretizes fear and oppression. The double dramatic role of characters in The Freedom is viably implemented at certain times through lying dead stretching their bodies on the stage, at other times, via standing and performing their dramatic roles.

Friel's focus on the miserable social conditions of the poor Irish is evident in the plays in question. If in Philadelphia, S.B. O'Donnell is the father of fourteen children. Lily in The freedom is the mother of eleven children living in two-roomed flat without running water. Thus, the cultural basis of Friel's plays lurks as he states between "the Irishman who suffers and the artist's mind which creates" (39).

In his farewell meeting with Kate Doogan, Gar reveals his sense of dislocation in Ballybeg which is socially depressing. He states:

> This place would drive anybody crazy! Look around you, for God's sake! Look at master Boyle! Look at my father! Look at the Canon! Look at the boys! Asylum cases, the whole bloody lot of them (40).

The Freedom is a social drama based on a violent political event that occurred in Derry in early 1970. It was the murder of fourteen civilian marchers by the British Army. Friel dramatized this violent act through the actions of the three principal characters: Lily, Michael and Skinner who are shot dead by the British troops. The dramatic spectacle is the Mayor's parlour of a city's Guildhall. The introduction of the setting in darkness implies mystery, violence and dislocation. Characters attempts to fulfill social identity through positive active participation in civil rights' marches.

To universalize Friel's social and political themes that transcend the boundaries of Ireland, so as to include other troubled areas of the world where man suffers oppression, poverty and repression due to the manipulation of the oppressive political powers, The Freedom focuses not only on Irish identity, but also on an identical image of man which can be attained through the development of human understanding and intimacy.

Terence Brown, who adopts an antagonistic attitude towards the repressive practices of the state against the individual, describes the sacrificial acts of the three Derry civilians saying:

> The play, in which, we see the actual lives of three victims of violent political repression denied any social significance by a state which must define them as legitimate targets of its claim to exercise in a society undergoing revolutionary transition, is Friel's most damning indictment of contemporary society (41).

The deaths of the three civilians and the crescendo of noises and violence that centre around the event ritualistically stand as symbols for humanity at large viewing at a certain distance the horrific image of violence injustice, oppression and depression. Dodds, the American sociologist, who occasionally detaches himself from the action of The Freedom to comment on the miserable conditions of the poor and on their constant social unrest, maintains:

> People with a culture of poverty are provincial and locally oriented and have very little sense of history. They know only their troubles, their own neighbourhood, their own local conditions, their own way of life, but they don't have the knowledge or the vision or the ideology to see that their problems are also

> the problems of the poor in the ghettos of New York and London and Paris, and Dublin - in fact all over the Western world (42).

As an integral part of their identity, the Irish seek for an Ireland one and free. Friel's vision is governed by that attitude. A practical example of his dramatization of the problem of the "socio part' of identity is represented in Dodd's generalization of the problem of the poor in the world. In this regard, The Freedom marks Friel's persistent attempts to find a meaning for "the dislocation between public definitions of the self", says Terence brown, of "personhood, of citizenship, and the actual life of the affections ..." (43).

The twin protagonists in Philadelphia mysteriously and rather invisibly seek for their own identities, be they social, national, cultural or economic. They might also lose their lives to achieve that goal as the civil rights marchers did in The Freedom. Lily, Michael and Skinner could be viewed as Dostoevskian antiheroes who mysteriously act against their own personal interests to assert their own freedom. They stand for man seeking for freedom in a world which is very unfair due to social injustice and political oppression.

The Freedom envisages Friel's theatrical attempts "to reveal images of the human", says George O'Brien, "images that articulate an innate emotional power through their unsuccessful resistance to cultural and institutional impositions..." (44). These theatrical humanist features provide, according to O'Brien, Friel's plays with depth and continuity. The drama emphasizes individuality as a dynamic stage for the fulfillment of

identity. The other stages stress that sense of awareness of the needs of the id and the requirements of the super ego.

The images of the humans are dramatically portrayed through rituals, the device of the double and cross-talk. For instance, if Gar's decision to emigrate occupies the central dramatic event of Philadelphia and the various people's reactions are ritualistically presented through repetition, songs and music, the murder of the three civilians represents the pivotal dramatic element in The Freedom and the people's different reactions to the event are ritualistically introduced through the Priest's blessing of Michael and mumbling prayers into his ears. He states:

> No sacrifice is ever vain. But its value can be diminished if it doesn't fire our imagination, stiffens our resolution, and makes us even more determined to see that the dream they dreamed is realized (45).

Dynamic elements of mystery in The Freedom are related to the civilian marchers, knocking on the door of the unknown and the unnamable to realize freedom and justice. The sense of mystery is viably dramatized in their double dramatic roles as dead bodies and active figures. In The Freedom characters stand for diverse socio-political views. If Michael, for instance, laments the political activism of the past marchers and regrets their real motivations, Lily stands for the poor of the world asking for social security and justice (46).

Lily's political views are articulated in her attitude towards referendum which in many ways is the attitude of the poor. According to her, civil rights demand "wan man, wan vote', no more gerrymandering" (47). Though she marches for them, says Maxwell "they are exotic

abstractions in her life" (48). Speaking cynically of class differences and the strife for survival, Lily claims:

> And below us Celia Cunningham's about half full now and crying about the sweepstake ticket she bought and lost when she was fifteen. And above us Dickie Devine's groping under the bed his trombone and he doesn't know yet that Annie pawned it on Wednesday for the wanes us fares and he's going to beat the tar out of her when she tells him. And down the passage and Andy Boyle's lying in bed, because he has no coat. And I'm here in the mayor's parlour, dressed up like the duchess of Kent and drinking port wine. I'll tell you something, Skinner - it's a very unfair world (49).

The use of loud speakers, of beamed searchlights and of noises and dark lights in The Freedom, signifies a universal call and a world cry for human dignity through the liberation of the poor from poverty and disease. Detaching from the dramatic action to sort out the poor areas of the world, Dodds elaborates:

> All over the world the gulf between the rich and the poor is widening .... In Latin America one per cent of the population owns seventy. Two per cent of the land and the vast majority of the farm labourers receive no wages at all but are paid in kind. And in my own country ... the richest country in the history of civilization, twenty per cent of the population live in extreme poverty (50).

Directing his words to Lily to sort out her motivations which are typical of many other poor people behind their civil rights marches, Skinner states:

> Because you with eleven kids and a sick husband in two rooms that aren't fit for animals. Because you exist in a state of subsistence that's about enough to keep you alive

> but too small guts.... Because for the first time in your life you grumbled and someone else, and you heard each other, and you became aware that there were hundreds, thousands, millions of us over the world, and in a vague groping way you were outrage (51).

To stress the murder, of the civil rights marchers and its mysterious implications, Priest states:

> I believe the answer to that question is this. They died for their beliefs, they died for their fellow citizens. They died because they could endure no longer the injuries and injustices and indignities that have been their lot for too many years. They sacrificed their lives so that you and I and thousands like us might be rid of that iniquitous yoke and might inherit a decent way of life (52).

Thus Friel, like other Irish playwrights, who dedicated themselves to the socio-political cause of Ireland, emphasizes the role of theatre in bringing about the socio-cultural and political change. He managed through Philadelphia as a memory play and The Freedom as a social drama to present his vision of a unified identical image of man. He also stressed the point that in man's search for identity, there is always a dialectical relationship between inward forces and socio-political reality.

Notes

1. This research is based on a paper entitled "The Mysteries of Identity in Brian Friel's Philadelphia, Here I Come! And The Freedom of the City that the researcher presented to the International Conference for Contemporary Literature and Theatre held in Siguenza, Spain, July 1995.

2. Robert Langbaum, The Mysteries of Identity. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977, p. 5
3. Ibid., p.7
4. Ibid., p. 15
5. Flannery O'Connor, Mystery And Manners: Occasional Prose. Sally and Robert Fitzgerald (eds.). London: Faber & Faber, 1972.
6. Ibid., p.81
7. Ibid., p.82
8. David Grossvogel. Mystery and Its Fictions: From Oedipus to Agatha Christie. London: The John Hopkins University press, p. 7
9. Sigmund Freud, The Ego and The Id. (Trans.) Joan Riverie. 6th Impression. London: The Hogarth press LTD, 1950, p.30.
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11. Friel's The Freedom of the City stands for the call of the poor and miserable cities for freedom. In the murder of the three Derry civilians lies the germ of the self-sacrificial act of the Dostoveskian antihero. In Philadelphia, Here I Come! The principal character Gar O'Donnel attempts to liberate himself from his personal fears, frustrations and failures through his decision to emigrate to America to have an hotel job sponsored by his aunt.
12. Erik Erikson, Life History And The Historical Moment. New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 1975 pp. 19-20
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14. Ibid., p.46
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35. Op. Cit., p. 67
36. Op. Cit., p. 64
37. Op. Cit., p. 66
38. Op. Cit., p. 123
39. Brian Friel's. "Plays Peasant And Unpeasant", Times Literary Supplement, March 17, 1972.
40. Op. Cit., p. 78-9
41. Terence Brown, "Have We A Context?: Transition, Self and Society In the theatre of Brian Friel", in Alan J. Peacock (ed.) The Achievement of Brian Friel. Buckinghamshire: Colin Smythe, Limited, 1993, p. 191.
42. Op. Cit., p. 111
43. Op. Cit., p. 191
44. Op. Cit., p. 123
45. Op. Cit., p. 125
46. The modernity of The Freedom of the City lurks in tackling such topical issues as terrorism, violence and the misrepresentation of authority. If Philadelphia expresses rather implicitly the innermost desire of the Irish to leave his land and find alternative ways for living. The Freedom of the City expresses more explicitly the violent political troubles in Derry during the British occupation.
47. Op. Cit., p. 154
48. Op. Cit., p. 102
49. Op. Cit., p. 141
50. Op. Cit., p. 163
51. Op. Cit., p. 154
52. Op. Cit., p. 125

The American Gothic In Sam Shepard's Family Trilogy: Curse of the Starving Class, Buried Child and True West

Reflecting modern American drama from the 1920's up to the present day, it has been observed that the Edenic concept of America as a promised land of freedom, love and adventure has been a recurring theme in the plays of such American playwrights as Elmer Rice, George O'Neil, Eugene O'Neill, Thornton Wilder, Marc Connelly, Clfford Odets, Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, Edward Albee and others.

To locate the American dream with its economic and physical concomitants within its historical context with the purpose of tracing its undesirable radical change, I found it appropriate to critically review George O'Neil's play, American Dream which, according to the drama critic Pradhan, meticulously pictures the protagonist's ideal of the American dream and his negative reaction against the radical socio-cultural and economic changes that terminate in his tragic end.

In the introduction to his book Modern American Drama: A Study in Myth and Tradition, Pradhan traces the historical development of the American Dream taking George O'Neil's play, American Dream as a practical example of tackling the protagonist's vision of the American dream throughout three historical periods. Each period is represented in an act where the protagonist's view of the American dream changes according to the socio-cultural and economic conditions.

The first act takes place in 1650 where Daniel Pingree appears as a young American idealist whose "powerful optimism and innocence", says

Pradhan, "are based on the strong foundation of his faith that he is a member of a new, regenerated and purified society that is totally free of evil" (1978, 9). "This is the land," says Daniel, "here will the seasons move to feed the earth; long summer standing to give us ease and heavy harvest" (1933, 41).

In Act 11, the time is 1849 where industrialization and technology forced Daniel to abandon his family and go West. He recognizes that "there's endless promise on the frontier" (71). The third act occurs in 1933 where the last descendant of the Pingree family is "a young intellectual", says Pradhan, "whose life of rich idleness has robbed him of all its meaning and purpose. The question is no longer of economic struggle but of life's relevance" (11). Realizing that his life is meaningless and that the American dream is an illusion. Daniel kills himself. In his significant dying speech, he says, "Well, I am the American story ... I'm here fully equipped to revel in the utopia produced by those relentless idealists of the past .... All right, God damn it! Let me spit it out! I'm nothing ..." (156).

Significantly, the tragic end of Daniel suggests the vanishing of the American dream and ensures, in a sense, his prophetic vision of the American gothic implied in the irreparable shattering of the contemporary life of America mired in doom.

According to NTC's Dictionary of Literary Terms, the term gothic "calls to mind gloom, grotesqueness, mystery and decadence" (1994, 92). With reference to literature, the term grotesque "refers to a type of writing, to a kind of character, and to a kind of subject-matter, all characterized by exaggeration and distortion of the natural or the expected" (93).

Historically, according to Abrams' A Glossary of Literary Terms, the term "Gothic" is applied to "a type of fiction which lacks the medieval setting but develops brooding atmosphere of gloom and terror" (1993, 78). Examples from the literature of terror throughout literary history are William Beckford's Vathek (1786), Ann Radcliff's The Mysteries of Udolpho (1794), the Brontes' novels and Maturin's Melmoth the Wanderer (2). Further instances within the American context that represent a continuation of the European gothic tradition that stimulate terror, violence and fear are Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter, Melville's Moby Dick, the tales of Edgar Allan Poe, Henry James' grotesque tales that entail feelings of revenge, hatred and jealousy and William Faulkner's Sanctuary and Absalom, Absalom! (3)

Thus, the elements that constitute the words gothic and grotesque represent the thematic and theatrical intentions of the contemporary American dramatist, Sam Shepard, whose prolific writings assert his influential presence in the contemporary American theatre. Such gothic elements as the male aggression and the oppression of women in a patriarchal society and the irrational perverse impulses are prevalent in Shepard's family trilogy.

To locate Sam Shepard within the spectrum of the American gothic whose features of abstractness, dialectical tensions and eccentric design have come through various European routes, is to discuss the gothic, as a literary genre, which originally appeared in the domains of poetry and drama, in the Oedipal plays of Sophocles, in the poetry of John Milton and in the plays of Shakespeare. Gothic scenes of wild heaths, storms and

shipwrecks are traceable in Measure for Measure, and various scenes of deaths, murder, ghosts, violence and nightmares are found in Macbeth and Hamlet.

Towards the end of the eighteenth-century, the gothic was transferred from drama and poetry spheres to the field of the novel via constant theatrical performances of Shakespeare's plays, using the language of gestures and bodily movements. Their ultimate aims were to widen the scope of the audiences' visions via exaggerated scenes of terror and horror.

Gothic fiction began to rise towards the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century when remarkable examples of gothic tales are found in the works of Horace Walpole, Ann Radcliff, Sir Walter Scott, Charlotte Bronte and Jane Austen. The gothic tradition came as a revolt against the moral and literary conventions of the age and as an experimentation on new fictional techniques. In this connection, Coral Howells elucidates:

> Gothic is allied with everything which is the opposite of augustan: instead of notions of order and decorum and rational judgement, it represents the darker side of awareness, the side to which sensibility and imagination belong, together with those less categorisable areas of guilt, fear and madness which are such important and terrifying components of the earlier Augustan anti-vision and Romanticism (1978, 5).

Coral Howells proceeds to focus on the gothic features and techniques of the nineteenth century novels which are "full of unresolved conflicts and repressions, packed with crises which are the outward signs of inward

tensions" (13). Essential to the gothic novels is their treatment of cultural alienation, loneliness and imprisonment. (4)

The advent of the gothic literary tradition to the American literary scene came via such American writers as Emerson, Hawthorne, Melville, Edger Allan Poe, and Henry James along with such European writers as Charles Robert Maturin, Sir Walter Scott, Dickens and the Brontes. (5)

These cross-cultural and literary interactions among the Euro-American writers with regard to the gothic literary tradition have influenced contemporary American writers, particularly Sam Shepard. In his article, "Of Life Immense in Passion, Pulse and Power: Sam Shepard and the American literary tradition", published in Bonnie Marranca's book: American Dreams: The Imagination of Sam Shepard, Michael Earley states:

> The symbolic abstraction of ... Hawthorne's forest, Melville's White Whale, or Poe's gothic spaces become echoed in Shepard's desert, sidewinder computer and farmhouse that hides secrets from the past (in Marranca, (1981, 127).

Thus the formative influences of the aforementioned writers upon Shepard are evident in his unique visualization of America as a remote and open land. This distinctive feature of Shepard's theatrical vision widens the scope of looking at his plays not as mere dramas in the traditional sense, but rather as romances impregnated with adventures supernatural and gothic scenes that dramatize the collapse and disintegration of the new society. Like Hawthorne and Poe, Shepard views that man's reaction to the

sense of fear in the face of the unknown, the invisible, the unspeakable and the untouchable as something that comes out of deep emotional needs.

The main objective of this study is to examine, in varying degrees, the dramatic implications of the Shepardesque theatrical representation of contemporary America in his trilogy of familial themes: Curse of the Starving Class (1976), Buried Child (1978) and True West (1980). Shepard's dramatic representation of that sense of doom and despair prevalent in the contemporary American scene is stressed in such later prose writings as Hawk Moon (1981) and Motel Chronicles (1982) where ample visions and dreams reflect Shepard's own personal experiences.

When in 1988 the Interview Magazine interviewer asked Shepard about his attitude towards contemporary life, he states:

> What's most frightening to me right now is this estrangement from life. People and things are becoming more and more removed from the actual. We are becoming more and more removed from the earth to the point that people just don't know themselves or each other or anything. We're this incredible global race of strangers. That's terrifying. Things are so dispensable now. People live together for a while ... then they split, and they never see each other again. Then they get together with somebody else-split. Have kids-split. Then the kids never see each other. It's absolutely frightening - this incessant strangement .... People are being amputated from each other and from themselves (1988, 78).

To authentically theatricalize such startling themes as decadence, incest, the fluidity of identity, murder, rape and macabre disintegrating families, Shepard varies his dramatic style which ranges from the surreal to

the suprarealistic to evoke emotional states that go so far back to the earliest cultural heredity of man.

Born in 1943, brought up in California, lived in New York in the 1960's and spent three years in London, Shepard managed to fuse his personal experiences making the various landscapes subject for suprarealist dramatic form of expression. Shepard's plays are described as semi-autobiographical. In his perceptive study in contemporary. American drama, Bigsby stresses the autobiographical formative influence upon Shepard's dramatic experience. He maintains:

> His father (Shepard's) reappears in various guises - an alcoholic who deserted the family, a man in love with space, a bewildered guide to a son who fears above all that he will metamorphose, become the man he feared as well as he loved, beçome as constant in his inconsistency as the person he despaired of loving until he wandered to his death one day (1994, 167).

Roxanne Rogers, Sam's sister, described the family turbulent conditions after her father's death. "We've always been spread around and a kind of carefree", says Roxanne, "in our relations. What happened is we decided to try to put this family back together". (1985, 7). "To put this family back together", implies the devastating socio-economic circumstances of Shepard's attitude that the best thing to do, to depict a true-to-life image of the family, is to focus on what is personal.

Shepard's sense of rootlessness implied in the distorted perception of his diseased characters is based, according to Bigsby, on Shepard's own personality. "The very restless impermanence of his early years", Bigsby claims, "trailing from Illinois to South Dakota to Utah, become an image of

a rootlessness which was both threat and redemption. The figure of the Cowboy, which provided the title of his first play, was to recur as image and fact throughout his work" (174).

Shepard's emotional experiences of repressions formulated his dramatic vision of contemporary life. His characters "focus their lives to a single point", says Bigsby, "theirs is not a stable world. Violence is a constant possibility, love the source of an anarchic energy. Passion destabilizes identity and distorts perception" (172).

Space, which is a central fact of America is exemplified in "the vastness of the prairie" , Andrei Codrescu states, "the marshes, the food plains, the journey of the Mississippi, space may be the one immutable mythic reality of America" (1996, 64). These American spacious elements are dramatically represented in Shepard's plays.

The radical material which has become a predominant characteristic of contemporary American life has its negative impact upon the American culture and consequently upon the quality of its literature. In this regard, Zinman highlights the distorted image of both American literature and art. He states:

> The artifacts of our culture that fill those plays and paintings - the automobiles, the boasters, and trays, ketchup bottles, cowboy hats, all the vinyl and metal- suggest a radical reduction in the variety and quality of the material world. The temptation to interpret the Junk as an indictment, as a comment in the end of civilization is a dangerous one, and is likely to lead to distortion of both the plays and pictures (1986, 426).

Although Shepard confirms in an interview with the American theatre in 1984 that in his plays he is "not interested in the American social scene at all" (1984, 50), critics and researchers find that the break up of the American family is a recurring theme in his plays. To achieve his dramatic goals, Shepard implements Joseph Chaikin's Open Theatre of Transformations where he manages to develop a new concept of characterization from being stereotypical into changeable and fluid. The aim is twofold. First, it provides the actor with the opportunity to play more than one character. Second, it mars the audience's identification with the character thus, providing itself with the opportunity to judge both the character and the dramatic situation rather objectively. Thus, Shepard focuses on the self in action with the aim of objectifying it to reveal its dividedness, discrepancies and mysteries. Theatrical language is devised in a way that allows imaginative freedom. Instead of focusing on the delineation of the characters' social conditions, language evokes the audiences' exhilarating visions. In this connection, Bigsby states:

> The power of words, for Shepard, does not so much lie in the delineation of a character's social circumstances as it does in the capacity to evoke visions in the eyes of audience. It follows that he has no interest in the literal transliteration of speeches, but he also resists descriptions of languages as symbolist or surrealist (173).

By so doing, Shepard adheres to the Emersonian dictum that "words are also action and actions are a kind of words" (in Marranca, 130).

Curse of the Starving Class, the first part of the trilogy, adopts a dramatic style that ranges from the surreal to the realistic through the

implementation of images rather than the adoption of the conventional theatrical language. The aim is to reveal the inner workings of the characters' minds who are psychologically wrecked by their false dreams and fake hopes that contemporary America hold out for them.

One of the images, which theatrically suggests, not only physical and psychological starvation but also a persistent quest for a defined way of life, is the image of the empty refrigerator whose door is constantly opened and slammed throughout the action. Critics have different perspectives in their consideration of the image. Some regard the "empty refrigerator' as a symbol of physical hunger. For instance, Marranca sees that the image is "a reminder of their (the characters') deprivation in the land of plenty" (106) which implies a straightforward condemnation of the economic situation in contemporary America. It is significant to present the social importance of this central metaphor of the refrigerator to the contemporary American. "Our white Goddess is the refrigerator", Andrei Codrescu states, "she stands white and tall in the kitchen, drawing all, feared by all, giver of sustenance and source of fearful calories" (64). Ritualistic incantations implemented in the constant opening and slamming of the door of the empty refrigerator imply a flagrant sense of decadence and spiritual sterility.

In Curse of the Starving Class, characters' physical and psychological starvation is implied in their actions and reactions towards each other. In this connection, Rodney Simard states:

> Hunger dominates the characters' actions and personalities. Ella's hunger for escape to Europe

> abandoning the notion of family and home which represents it, Emma's hunger to go to Mexico, also rejection of both home and homeland, to live her image of a beat existence; Weston's and Wesley's similar familial starvation, their hunger to have roots and a sense of place; and Wesley; hunger to hold on to the farm, his past, present, and future his heritage and sense of belonging and self-worth (85).

Just like other plays of familial background, Curse of the Starving Class pictures "the autobiographical presence", David DeRose claims, "of a young man haunted by unresolved ties to family, father and personal heritage" (1992, 91). Shepard's visualization of the disintegration of contemporary family life is manifest in the gothic images which inaugurate the drama. Wesley, a teenage son collects the pieces of smashed front door to the house. Weston, the father came back late one night heavy drunk. He found the door closed. He smashed it. The wreckage of the front door to the house, which suggests the father's violent and aggressive attitude towards the family members, implies insecurity, terror, absence and invasion.

ELLA : Well, just leave it until he gets back.

WESLEY : In the meantime we gotta' live in it.

ELLA : He'll be back. He can clean it up then.

Wesley goes on clearing the debris into her wheel barrow. Ella finishes winding the clock and then sets it on the stove.

ELLA : (looking at clock) I must've got to sleep at five in the morning.

WESLEY	: Did you call the cops?
ELLA	: Last night?
WESLEY	: Yeah.
ELLA	: Sure I called the cops. Are you kidding? I was in danger of my life. I was being threatened.
WESLEY	: He wasn't threatening you.
ELLA	: Are you kidding me? He broke the door down didn't he?
WESLEY	: He was just trying to get in.
ELLA	: That's no way to get into the house. There's plenty of other ways to get into a house. He could've climbed through a window.
WESLEY	: He was drunk.
ELLA	: That's not my problem. (in Seven Plays, 1986, 135-3)

By so doing, Weston "not only violates their safety", says DeRose, "but by virtue of his absence as father and protector, he leaves them open to attack and invasion from others" (92).

> indescribable. Then I heard the Packard coming up the hill. From a mile off I could tell it was Packard by the sound of the valves. The lifters have a sound like nothing else (137).

According to Shepard, the family "curse" is running in the real blood relationship. It is something infectious being transferable from the father to the son and from one generation to the other. The younger

generation exemplified by Wesley and Emma replicate the older generation represented by Weston and Ella. Towards the close of the drama, Wesley incarnates his father's image implied in putting his clothes on.

WESLEY	: (dazed) I'm hungry.
EMMA	: You're sick! What're you doing with his clothes on? Are you supposed to be the head of the family now or something? The Big Cheese? Daddy Bear?
WESLEY	: I tried his remedy, but it didn't work..
EMMA	: He's got a remedy? (195)

Wesley proceeds to state that he started to put all his (Weston's) clothes on. "His base ball cup, his tennis shoes," says Wesley, "his overcoat. And every time I put one thing on it seemed like a part of him was growing on me. I could feel him taking over me" (113). Another gothic image which reveals the horrific nature of familial relationship is connected with Wesley's inhuman attitude towards Emma, his sister. To show his revolt against her idea of political demonstration, which, in a sense, suggests the political attitude of Shepard himself, Wesley unzips his pants and urinates on Emma's 4 Charts while Ella, his mother just keeps eating at the table. By so doing, Wesley turns Emma's dream into a nightmare. She states:

> I'm not dreaming now. I was dreaming then. Right up to the point when I got the halter on. Then as soon as he took off I stopped. I stopped dreaming and saw myself being dragged through the mud (149).

In many ways Wesley resembles such characters as Natty Bumpo and Huckelberry Finn. In this respect, Earley expounds:

> Like so many similar instances in earlier American literature, Shepard's plays examine how specific selves outgrow their environment. Like Huck Finn's escape down the river and disappearance into a newly generated self, Shepard's characters frequently try the same tact. He pits the private self against the national self. (In Marranca, 129).

A further physical image which realistically breaks the fictional reality of the stage relates to the physical presence of character. Significantly, the startling naked appearance of Wesley carrying a lamb into his arms shatters the stage illusion. Commenting on these physical images, DeRose states that "the purely physical reality of the actor-either exposing his genitals to urinate or entering nacked - is so strong that the created illusion of his character and the fictional stage reality are shattered" (97).

Shepard's theatricalization of such vital physical images is an essential part of his consciousness of the open theatre's potentials which stimulate the audience's sense of perception and level up the lacunae between its conscious and subconscious activities.

Shepard's adoption of "a suprarealist style" in William Demastes's own words, particularly in Curse of the Starving Class, is due to his consciousness of the negative impact of materialism on contemporary life in America. Following that theatrical realist style, the drama confirms, according to Demastes, "America's decay and self-destructive doom" (234). Demastes goes on to elucidate that:

> .... Shepard uses this ethic to communicate his search for a new set of tenets to replace the sterile code of

> modern American culture. His is more than an attempt to stimulate an audience into a sensory reawakening. His goals are clearly directed toward a particular meaningful end (232).

Recognizing that Ella plans to sell the house to the developers, Wesley describes them as "Zombies". An entry to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary reads that "a Zombie" is a dull slow person who seems to act without thinking or not to be aware of what is happening around her or him... a dead body that has been make alive again by witch-craft" (1995, 1392).

Thus the startling image of "a Zombie" in Curse of the Starving Class suggests irrationality, death and utter destruction of the natural environment in the American Prairie areas. It is a symbol of destroying everything natural. At one level of interpretation the drama could be a direct warning against modern civilization which destroys the natural landscape depriving it of order, peace, honour and beauty. In this sense, the role of literature, exemplified in the play in question, in keeping and bettering the environment, is quite conspicuous in Wesley's negative reaction against the developers which is quite evident in his dialogue with Emma:

WESLEY : You don't' understand what's happening yet, do you?
EMMA : With what?
WESLEY : The house, you think it's Mr. And Mrs. America who're gonna' buy this place, but it's not, it's Taylor.
EMMA : He's a lawyer.

WESLEY : He works for an agency-land development.

EMMA :So what?

WESLEY : So it means more than losing a house. It means losing a country.

EMMA : You make it sound like an invasion.

WESLEY : It is. It's a Zombie invasion.

Taylor is the head Zombie.

He's the scout for the other zombies.

He's only a sign that more Zombies are on their way.

They'll be filling through the door pretty soon.

EMMA : Once you get it built.

WESLEY : There'll be bulldozers crashing through the orchard. There'll be giant steel balls crashing through the walls. There'll be foremen with sleeves rolled up and blue prints under their arms. There'll be steel girders panning across of land Cement pilings. Prefab walls. Zombie architecture, owned by invisible Zombies, built by Zombies or the use and convenience of all other Zombies. A Zombie city! Right here! Right where we're living now (162-163).

Shepard's unique concept of the family which is not essentially based on a social standpoint but as something running in the blood is dramatized in the following speech of Weston:

> It was good to be connected by blood like that. That a family wasn't just a social thing. It was an animal thing. It was a reason of nature that we were all together under

> the same roof. Not that we had to be but that we were supposed to be. And I started feeling glad about it. I started feeling full of hope (188).

If Curse of the Starving Class focuses on an irreparable "curse" of the family due to inherent emotional repressions that carry the virus of violence and destruction, Buried Child, as its title indicates, suggests death with all its concomitants of darkness, horror, macabre and doom. The play is based on classical Greek drama as well as on Ibsen's Ghosts (1881). It mainly stresses the inability of the family members to recognize the return of their absent son after six years of absence. The drama tackles such gothic themes as incest, patricide and infanticide which represented through characters who stand as various landscapes of the world, the nation and the self. By adding a spiritual dimension to the socio-psychological starvation initiated in Curse, Buried Child presents characters who live in isolated islands. Bigsby finds a similarity between Shepard's delineation of characters and Tennesse Williams' depiction of his characters. He states that Shepard's "characters .. inhabit a broken world. They cling to one another with the same desperation, damage one another with the same inevitability" (192).

Both Dodge and Halie live in worlds of their own. While the former keeps himself isolated and disintegrated due to his aphasia, where he finds a refuge in television and whisky, the latter finds her own reality in the past pictures of her family. At the outset of the drama, Halie is about to leave to meet Father Dewis "in order to recreate the past", says DeRose, "and repopulate her world with heroes to replace the monsters to which she has given birth" (100).

Shepard varies his dramatic method from the surrealistic to the realistic to intensify the dramatic action and to ensure that sense of doom and decadence his characters live in. to fulfill that end, he implements such startling images as the corn husk that Tilden brought on the stage to cover Dodge's body during his sleep and the horrific image in which Bradley savagely cut Dodge's hair till the scalp. These startling images gothicize the drama and ensure the wastelandish environment the characters inhabit. While the former image implies Tilden's constant attempt to destroy the Patriarchian domination symbolized by his wishful thinking of Dodge's death, the latter image shows the violent and inhuman spirit of a son towards his father.

The appearance of Vince, Dodge's grandson, with his Californian girl-friend, Shelly suggests the coming of a saviour to get the family back to its proper order, to protect it from decay, disintegration and doom. His coming after six years of absence symbolizes the young American idealist under the pain of belonging to a family. To fulfill that end, Vince searches every American road for his identity, integrity and dignity. By so doing, he, in a sense, recalls George O'Neil's Daniel who ceaselessly struggles to belong to a world which has radically been changed.

However, due to the family split, Dodge could not recognize his grandson. He could not even admit his presence or his relation to the house. This sense of estrangement that characterizes both Dodge and Vince is quite apparent in the following dialogue:

VINCE : I'm trying to figure out what's going on here!

DODGE : Is that it?

VINCE : Yes I mean I expected everything to be different.

DODGE : Who are you to expect anything? Who are you supposed to be?

VINCE : I'm Vince! Your grandson!

DODGE : Vince. My Granson.

VINCE : Tilden's son.

DODGE : Tilden's son, Vince.

VINCE : You haven't seen me for a long time.

DODGE : When was the last time?

VINCE : I don't remember.

DODGE : You don't remember.

VINCE : No.

DODGE : You don't remember. How am I supposed to remember if you don't remember? (89)

This decadent state of the family terrifies Shelly who never expects it to be so horrific. In addition the family members have antagonistic attitude towards Shelly. Dodge calls her "a smart ass" (89), Bradley describes her as "a prostitute" (120). The family moves in a vicious circle. Therefore, no one is capable of controlling one's passions which are impregnated with violence and aggression.

Bradley's horrific appearance on the stage due to his physical disability fits Artaud's demand of the sudden appearance of a fabricated Being ... capable of reintroducing on the stage of a little breath of that great metaphysical fear which is at the root of all ancient theatre" (Artaud, 1958, 44).

Physically disable due to his amputated leg and psychologically deteriorated because of his physical deformity, Bradley aggressively puts his fingers in Shelly's mouth which viably implies an act of rape.

BRADLEY : Open your mouth.

SHELLY : What?

BRADLEY : (motioning for her to open her mouth) Open up (She opens her mouth slightly).

SHELLY : Wider.
(She opens her mouth wider).

BRADLEY : Keep it like that.
She does. Stares at BRADLEY. With his free hand he puts hid fingers into her mouth. She tries to pull away.

BRADLEY : Just stay put!
She freezes. He keeps his fingers in her mouth. Stares at her. Pause. He pulls his hand out. She closes her mouth, keeps her eyes on him. Bradley smiles (107).

This disquieting theatrical image implies the cruel behaviour of Bradley due to his uncontrollable savage nature. Of the dramatic

significance of the physical violent images which create intensity in Buried Child, DeRose maintains:

> The dual nature of such unresolved image in Buried Child is representative of Shepard's attempt to incorporate his talent for creating disquieting stage pictures...The images that end the three acts of Buried Child - the haircut, the fingers in the mouth, the infant corpse do not so much disrupt the action of the play as they intensify the sense of foreboding that has been realistically introduced through the action (105).

To heighten that sense of foreboding, the child corpse remains a mystery. It is a commonplace gothic that addresses the irrational mystery in man to which he has not yet found key. No final word concerning the infant's identity is said. For Tilden, the child is his; who once buried him. For Dodge, the child was buried long before Tilden's birth. And elsewhere in the drama, Dodge admits that Tilden knows everything about the child and the child is not his for he and Halie did not sleep in the same bed for six years. Most probably, the child is a product of an incest that brought about the aridity of the land and the utter despair in the farmhouse, a typical world of Oedipal dramas. The gothicisty of the drama lurks in the unresolved secrets in the farmhouse.

Another decadent element in Buried Child which reveals the bizarre behaviour and negative parental feelings against their children is quite conspicuous in the following dialogue between Shelly and Dodge about Halie's attitude towards life.

SHELLY : She's looking down at the baby like it was somebody else's. Like it didn't even belong to

her.

DODGE : That's about enough out'a you! You got some funny ideas. Some damn funny ideas. You think just because people propagate they have to love their offspring? You never seen a bitch eat her puppies? Puppies? (111-112).

In one of his speeches about drugs President Clinton maintained that half of the drugs produced in the world are being consumed in the United States whose population represents one fifth of the world population. This grotesque image of contemporary America, where young Americans indulge into all sorts of drugs, is viably stressed in Halie's dialogue with Father Dewis:

HALE : Our youth becoming monsters.

DEWIS : Well, I uh ...

HALIE : Oh you can disagree with me if you want, Father. I'm open to debate. I think argument only enriches both sides of the question don't you? (she moves towards Dodge) I suppose, in the long run, it doesn't matter. When you see the way things deteriorate before your very eyes. Everything running down hill. It's a kind of silly to even think about youth (117).

Towards the end of Buried Child, Dodge admittingly recalls the story of drowning and burying the child in the backyard of the farmhouse. The sterility of the land, due to incest, for Halie was pregnant out of nowhere, recalls to mind the sterile world of Sophocles' Oedipus the King. Dodge stresses the point that he and Halie "hadn't been sleep in' in the

same bed for about six years" (123). The entrance of Tilden carrying the infant corpse in his arms symbolizes the familial doom. Just as the earlier American writers who wrote in the gothic-line tradition, "Sam Shepard takes it for granted" says Earley, that the mystery is insoluble and will forever leave its imprints strewn throughout the imaginative landscape of both mind and body" (in Marranca, 132).

In this regard, Bonnie Marranca stresses the inevitability of the symbol in drama to authentically depict a unified world of contemporary American life where people experience commonly shared values instead of producing images which aestheticize feelings, history and politics. Marranca states:

> If American culture is moving more and more toward the production and consumption of imagery, it has to do with the aestheticizing of feeling, of history, of the self, of politics, of personal relations: our fragmented world has lost the means to express itself in a unified symbology. The contemporary way of expressing the world and the self is through imagery. The symbol reflects a wholeness, a shared system of values and experience that is largely absent from contemporary life which is dominated by the images of thins, not the things themselves 920).

True West, the third part of the trilogy, is a Shepardesque dramatic attempt to keep realism at work. The drama shows Shepard as a contemporary version of Poe where his focus is on the disintegration of the psyche due to inward crisis. Its setting is a suburban kitchen and breakfast nook in Southern California. Two worlds are existent. One is a civilized, well-distinguished world represented by Austin. The other is uncivilized

and brutal represented by Lee who lives outside law, cheating, gambling, and stealing. Together the two characters crystallize not only Shepard's inner psyche as a dramatist but also a representation of man's constant wavering between charity, goodness, mystery and wild experience. The dramatic action centres around the two brothers, Austin and Lee. While the former comes from the north to spend some time in his mother's house looking after her plants while she is vacationing in Alaska, meanwhile, meeting a Californian producer, Saul Kimmer to discuss a film script, the latter lives in the South. He is a petty thief who prefers to live in the desert.

Shepard's theatricalization of the West is connected with the American concept of the frontier ethic which, in a sense, symbolizes love, freedom, adventure and redemption. This image is no longer the same. It symbolizes a retreat from the collective interests into the individualistic ones, and a withdrawal to live rather in isolation than in community. According to Shepard the West is no longer predictable and has no longer peace. This point is dramatized in Austin's speech when he says: "There's no such thing as the West anymore! It's a dead issue! It's dried up, Saul, and so are you" (35). According to Demastes, True West, "first turns to the theme of vanishing ideals (epitomized by the old West) and then reveals the consequences such a loss has on individual identity. (1987, 238)". The drama deals with the fluidity of identity within a realistic dramatic setting with the intention of avoiding the deformity of its shapes, objects and colours as Shepard so viably elucidated in his Preface to the play.

Essential to the treatment of a true-to-life image of the West is the dramatization of the two brothers' attitude towards it, which inaugurates Scene 2.

Austin : ... Foothills are the same though, aren't they?

Lee : Pretty much, It's funny goin'up in there. The smells and everything. Used to catch snakes up there, remember?

Austin :You caught snakes.

Lee : Yeah. And you'd pretend you were Geronimo or some damn thing. You used to go right out to lunch.

Austin : I enjoyed my imagination.

Lee : That what you call it? Looks like yer still enjoyin'it (11-12).

According to Demastes, Shepard does not call his play a "real" West but he prefers a "true", West for his focal concern is on the states of mind of his characters rather than on their location (239). To recognize a kind of true image of the American West, characters find it important to strip themselves down "to their essential selves", says Demastes, "and engaging in mortal combat on an uncharted and untamed psychological frontier" (240).

Fundamental to the dramatic element of conflict in True West is the dichotomy between two opposing values represented by two brothers. The attempt to reconcile the two seems impossible. For the conflict is viably between "a purely renegade spirit which would be too destructive", says

Demastes, "and a purely civilized spirit which would be too sterile. The struggle must continue interminably, as it does in Lee's script where the chase has no end" (241).

The gothic elements in True West lurk in Shepard's dramatization of the horrific and mysterious position of man implied in the self - dividedness of the two brothers. They are likened to two cowboys riding at night, chasing each other. Neither does the chaser know where the chased is going to take him, nor the chased does know where to go. It is a gothic image which entails the sense of muddle that the modern man lives in.

> The play opens at night, to the sound of crickets; Austin is illuminated by a small, kerosene lamp, while Lee's presence in Mom's small, dimly lighted kitchen seems tarring, threatening, somehow irrational - he could almost be a figment of Austin's imagination, a nightmare (in Marranca 1981, 120).

Although Austin's civilized spirit is flagrantly stressed in the finale of the play, it does not guarantee that the struggle comes to an end, for in "the course of the drama," says T.E. Kalem, "two brothers exchange identities, summoning up Baudlaire's line; Mon semblable - mon frere". (1981, 92).

Of the two warring brothers who recall in one way or another the ancient tale of Cain and Abel, Shepard confirms that they are one person split in two. In a sense, if Austin stands for Shepard, Lee is his alter ego. "Their opposing characters", says DeRose, "represent a split that Shepard feels within himself and within the psyche in general" (109).

If the gothic image in Curse of the Starving Class lurks, according to DeRose, in the uncontrollable savagery passed by blood from parents to

child, and if the horrific image in Buried Child is implied in "the infant corpse that embodied the inherited brutality of the family's males, in True West the sense of the grotesque which involves psychologically deteriorated characters whose actions are absurd lies, according to DeRose, in "a primal capacity for violence and mayhem that Lee seems to bring into the house and that is unleashed in Austin as he feels what it is like to be his brother" (109-110).

Characters dynamically act according to their own individualistic need, a predominant feature of contemporary life in America. In this respect, Bigsby states:

> Reality is never stable in Shepard's plays. The America his characters manufacture serves the purpose of their own needs, which are rooted less in history than in a private set of anxieties or images.... The frontier they explore has less to do with the landscape they inhabit than with their own state of mind. The country of which they are alienated citizens is one contaminated with fiction (196-197).

The frontier ethic for which the American West stands has two meanings. At one level, it stands for external natural surroundings. At another level, it symbolizes the psychological state of the characters' mind. Controlled by technological surroundings, Austin and Lee carried out a series of thefts particularly Austin, who in an attempt to assert himself before Lee, steals a bunch of toasters.

Scene 8 encompasses memorable theatrical stage images which suggest various shattering scenes of contemporary American life.

> Very early morning, between night and day. No crickets, coyotes feverishly in distance before light comes up, a small fire blazes up in the dark from alcove area, sound of Lee smashing typewriter methodically than dropping pages of his script into a burning bowl set on the floor of alcove, flames leap up, Austin has a whole bunch of stolen toasters, breathing on them and polishing them with a dish towel, both men are drunk, empty Whisky bottles and beer cans litter the floor of Kitchen (42, 43).

There is a sudden metamorphosis of the two brothers. Austin abandons his own civilized life in the city and longs to share Lee's own life. To persuade Lee to take him to the desert, Austin promises to write him a screen play. At first, Lee shows disagreement, then, he agrees. Amid that scene of confusion, mess and disruption, Mom appears walking through her kitchen to recognize that everything is topsyturvy and the plants in the windows are dead. Feeling that bitter sense of being homeless due to confusion at home, Mom who reverberates, in a sense, Linda in Miller's Death of a Salesman decides to leave to a motel.

The appearance of the helpless Mom towards the end of True West suggests that she is "a kind of satiric dues ex Machina", Kleb says, "without the will or power to restore order in her world-a mom without a country" (120- 121).

Although they vary as to their socio-psychological circumstances, Ella, Halie and Mom the three mothers in the trilogy, have points in common. They are disillusioned, homeless, alienated and threatened by certain invisible forces. They are mere spectators of the males' aggressiveness. However, Mom's helpless state ensures her sense of despair. In this respect, Kleb states:

> Shepard's treatment of Mom and her world is harsh: he trashes her kitchen and kills her plants, his portrait of her is satiric. She may seem less vividly "the Terrible Mother" than Hailie in Buried Child, but her weird iconographic presence seems just threatening and life denying (122).

"Like Ella", Kleb proceeds to state, "Mom is infected with what Shepard considers the most serious new-western sickness-alienation from the land" (122-123). In his article "Sam Shepard storyteller' published in The New York Times, Ben Brantley stresses that although most, if not all, of Shepard's themes seem extremely objective, the personal experience remains dominant. Brantley states:

> ... in its most pedestrian sense, personality is something Mr. Shepard refuses to see as fixed. Throughout his thirty years as a playwright, he has created a series of fluid portraits of people for whom identity is, at best, a tentative proposition ... The young man in Buried Child ... looks into the rear-view mirror of his car and face dissolving into those of his ancestors (1994, pp. 1, 26).

In her feminist reconsideration of modern American drama, Linda Hart pinpoints the negative attitude of Shepard towards women characters. She recognizes that the family trilogy is a group of "Oedipal dramas that represent escalating destructiveness within nuclear family politics. Women in these plays are powerless spectators to the enduring, eternal and inevitable battle between father and son" (in June Schleueter, 1989, 214).

Linda Hart proceeds to stress the point that the trilogy is a viable manifestation of the socio - psychological and cultural problems due to the male aggressive desire to dominate society. She states that the plays:

> continue and perpetuate the story of male desire ... and power. Hence his (Shepard's populrity, his honorary status as a mythic spokesman for America, and penetration into the psyche of the American mind is no mystery for the feminist spectator. (224)

The image of the old man which is clearly dramatized in Curse and Buried Child is not clear in True West. He is, according to Kleb, "a rumor, a ghost, a memory" (123). Significantly, the physical confrontation between Austin and Lee that ends the drama marks the endless antagonistic spirit that ensures the impossibility of friendly relationship. However, constant attempts might take place to reclaim this overaching image of waste.

This savage scene begins with Lee's decision to leave along changing his mind to go with Austin to the desert. He moves towards the door carrying a paper bag full of Mom's antique plates. All of a sudden, Austin grabs a telephone cord and throttles Lee from behind. After a violent act that comes near to death the two brothers face off in the kitchen. "The ending of True West is startling and abrupt." says Kleb, "it clicks of the dramatic action like a light and leaves the basic conflict unresolved. Such a culminating freeze-frame has almost become a common place in modern drama..." (120).

Of the dramatic implication of using midnight as time to begin Act II of True West, DeRose recognizes:

> Once Shepard draws the audience into the undomesticated midnight landscape of the second act, like the unseen coyotes in the play who lure "innocent pets away from their homes", he sheds the light of day

> on his creation. In the midday heat of the final scene .... Mom's clean, tidy kitchen has been transformed into a desert junkyard (112).

Thus, Shepard manages, through varying his dramatic style to gothicize contemporary America through a suprarealistic style that marks the transformations and transpositions of his personal fights into artistic myth. Thus his unique dramatic method has contributed to the normalization of the gothic tradition in contemporary American drama. In this respect, it is worth quoting Ruby Cohn's estimation of Shepard as a contemporary playwright of a distinguished dramatic status:

> Like his ancestor O'Neill ... Shepard in maturity is dramatizing a tragic America mired in sin. Like the Fitzgerald of The Great Gatsby, Shepard is ... seduced by and critical of American wealth and its artifacts. Like Thomas Wolf, he realizes that you can't go home again - to a pastoral civilization. Like no other American playwright, Shepard enfolds figures of popular culture into more lasting patterns of myth-true west, rock stars, detectives, science fiction. It was by chance that this Westerner by temperament found himself in New York East Village in the mid-1960's. (85-86)

In fine, the American dream has vanished and turned into a nightmare. This is one of the frustrations of a world of materialism where human life has become a play thing. As he pointed out in his note to A Lie of the Mind, Shepard's stress of the love failure and the buried dreams has constantly been dramatized in his works in general and in his family trilogy in specific. Typical of the unclarity and vagueness of his characters is the inability to judge them for they are not located in well-defined social and psychological worlds of their own. As in his recent antiwar play, States of

Shock (1991), written during the Gulf War, Shepard condemns the American political domination of the world that has fostered, due to interior incoherence, hatred, violence and wars.

Notes

1. This is a modified research paper of a presentation the researcher made at the annual conference of the International Society for Contemporary Literature and Theatre entitled: "New Images of America in Contemporary Literature and Theatre", held at Park City, Utah, U.S.A., July, 1996.
2. For more detailed information on the passions of violence and crimes, within the European context, particularly in the Anglo-Irish setting, which recall episodes in The Mysteries of Udolpho, Frankenstein and Melmoth the Wanderer, see Julian Moynahan, "The Politics of Anglo-Irish Gothic: Maturin, Le Fanu and "The Return of the Repressed"", in Heinz Kosok Ed. Studies in Anglo-Irish Literature, (Bonn: Bouvier, 1982), 43-53.
3. For further studies on modern gothic which focus on the irrational in man due to inward problems, see Russel Nye. The Unembrassed Muse: The Popular Arts in America (New York, 1970).
4. For more views on the grotesque feelings in gothic novels, see Mario Praz's introductory essay to Three Gothic Novels edited by Peter Fair Clough. Praz discusses the gothic elements in Walpole's The Castle of Otranto, Beckford's Vathek and Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1968).
5. For further detailed comparisons between the American gothic and its origin in European fiction. See Walter Allen Tradition and Dream: The English and American Novel from the Twenties to Our Time, (London: the Hogarth Press, 1986).

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Arcadian Landscapes In Lorraine Hansberry's

A Raisin In The Sun and The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window

Arcadia is an isolated rural area in ancient Greece described by Jean Charles Seigneuret as being "surrounded in all sides by mountains" where "the Arcadians were regarded as among the most ancient peoples in Greece" (1988, 105-6). Standing as an archetype for "an isolated, changeless and idyllic existence", Arcadia can provide, according to Seigneuret. "avenues of escape from a landscape or a situation filled with tension and unavoidable conflict" (106).

Arcadian landscapes are rampant in European literature in such works as Milton's Arcadian elegy, "Lycides" and "Paradise Lost" and in Dante's The Divine Comedy. Also, Arcadia "is best exemplified," says Seigneuret, "in Shakespeare's As You Like It". (109) where the Duke and his men are in the forest of Arden living like "the old Robin Hood of England" (109).

Rousseau's philosophical and emotional outlook towards the Arcadian vision entails a remarkable change in the writers' attitudes towards Arcadias in that a return to nature and the natural was predominant. Arcadia is also shown in the popular literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe (1719) and in the later novels that followed the same pattern. [1]

Within the American context, wilderness is a distinctive Arcadian feature which has not essentially been found in Europe. Therefore, out of

their national pride of it, the Americans glorified it and contributed to it, as a deistic feature and as a national literary aspect. [2]

As American landscapists, Thomas Cole and Cooper focused on the wilderness as a medium of artistic productions. According to Cole, it is through wilderness that his "country men could be instructed in the glories of the native landscape" (1971, 78).

Wilderness is defined as sterile areas where the nonexistence of men and the existence of wild animals are remarkable. It is also found in the nonhuman environments such as the sea and the outer space. According to Nash "any place in which a person feels stripped of guidance, lost and perplexed may be called a wilderness" (3)

Henry David Thoreau focused on man's position in the universe and on his relation to nature. For Thoreau, "wilderness", Nash states, "was a reservoir of wildness vitally important for keeping the spark of the wild alive in man". (89) According to Nash, Thoreau's vision of wilderness "has no specific georgraphical location, but was found "whenever a man fronts a fact" (89).

Although Walt Whitman was a remarkable adherent to nature, he "divorced", says Seigneuret, "the Arcadian from its usual hostility to technology and the machine" (111). While Whitman used Manhattan and Brooklyn as the backdrop for his poetic ideals, Henry James found his ideal image in Paris, the city of light and culture.

Central to the Arcadian in literature is the theme of death which is, according to Seigneuret, "the one unsolvable problem, the single unbanishable evil of the Arcadian landscape" (107).

With the development of human thought, radical changes have been taking place and the return to the Arcadian landscapes becomes essential for the continuity of human race shown in the contemporary world's strenuous efforts to better and protect environment from pollution. In this connection, Seigneuret states:

> In the course of the cultural revolution of the 1960s and 1970s, the drug culture and the pastoral and Arcadian ideal were united. Alienation was to be overcome and man reunited to nature and to his fellow man in the world of drug-induced Arcadia .... The Arcadian vision is a perennial dream that, in spite of its remoteness for reality, continues to captivate the mind of the Western man. It is a part of the larger dream of harmony that looks beyond discord and alienation to the reconciliation of man with nature and man with man (112).

In its broader sense, the term landscape constitutes such varied aspects as wilderness, psychic landscape, cityscape, mountaineering, noble savage and sublimity. "psychic landscape", Seigneuret claims, "applies specifically to a quality within woodlands, prairies, mountain ranges, canyons or deserts that elicits a strong inner response" (1988, 1005).

Examples of the strong impact of the land upon the human psyche in that it provokes inward psychological response are found, according to Seigneuret, in such works as Frank Water's The Colorado (1946), Perry Miller's Nature's Nation (1967)[3] and Michel Butor's The Spirit of Mediterranean Places (1971) where Butor shows the influence of "*le genie*

du lieu" on the inward world of the beholder. Instances of the natural landscape whose lure usurps man's capacity to describe are manifest in Jack London's short fiction about the Canadian Northwest where characters are victims of "psychic fear" (1006).

In Tom Vanderbilt's view, the image of the garden is no longer natural as it was before. He states, "it is now more apt to say that the machine makes the garden possible; or even that we have drifted so far from industrial and pastoral that either can "take place" only in theme parks, museums, and preserves" (1988, 72).

While Burton Pike pinpoints the conflicting elements that constitute the image of the city both as a geographical location and as a fictional scape, prescribing its fascination to the fact that it "embodies man's contradictory feelings - pride, love, anxiety, and hatred - toward the civilization he has created and the culture to which he belongs" (1981, 26), Tom Vanderbilt sees that "cities long ago stopped being physically advantageous centers of trade and have instead become a nexus of images and slogans, traded intensely in the market of perception" (72).

Seigneuret pictures the city as "the centre of alienation, the loss of freedom and innocence, the corruption of the individual, and the cause of the onset of human decadence"(257-8). To relate cityscape to reality is to relate literature to such disciplines as sociology, psychology, history, philosophy and science. This is found in Pike's focus in the innate relationship between the city and its dwellers in that "the minds of the city's living inhabitants", says Pike, "come from this combination of past and present" (4).

Essential to the treatment of physical explorations in literature is mountaineering fiction found in Mason's Running Water (1907) and most recently in Jon Krakauer's Into The Wild (1996) and Into Thin Air (1997), where characters climb mountains in direct risky confrontations with nature.

Cinematic productions of several mountaineering novels are James Hilton's "Lost Horizon" (1937) and James Ramsey Ullman's "The White Tower" (1950) where such famous film stars as Spencer Tracy and Clint Eastwood achieved great success.

Related to the treatment of the Arcadian landscapes in literature is the image of the noble savage shown in the image of the European peasants, American Red Indians and in the contemporary Afro Americans who represent varied images of the noble savage.

Relating the natural grandeur to divinity which is artistically named sublimity, is crystallized in the expansive geography in such American cityscapes as Chicago ad New York. In this way "landscape description", Seigneuret states, "served as more than a literary device; it became a pretext for defining the needs of a nation seeking self-definition" (1250).

Although Lorraine Hansberry, a young Afro-American dramatist (1930-1965), might not be thought of as a landscape dramatist, this study claims that she is one. This claim is based on Hansberry's dramatic implementation of Arcadian landscapes in her A Raisin in The Sun and The Sign In Sidney Brustein's Window to dramatize her vision of man in general and of blacks in particular. While in the former the inhabitants of

her dramatic world attempt, as AfroAmericans, to escape the unavoidable sense of homelessness, to establish an Arcadia implied in their American dream of material success, in the latter, Sidney and the Pardus sisters, who stress Hansberry's holistic vision which is not confined to blacks, suffer isolation, alienation and an acute sense of futility. Their inward sense of loss urges them to seek self-definition via Arcadian landscape. In addition, Hansberry seems to stress the feminists' anger against that sense of complacency towards the patriarchal culture with the aim of creating a less oppressive culture through women's active participation in making man's history.

Hansberry's philosophical views, which are the product of her worldwide experiences, formulated her dramatic vision. She implemented the natural environment as well as the man-made-landscapes as revelatory tools of man's sociopsychological and cultural states of mind. Her landscapic outlook is manifest in her attitude towards the Negro writer and his roots. She writes:

> I was born on the South Side of Chicago. I was born black and a female. I was born in a depression after one world war, and came into my adolescence during another. While I was still in my teens the first atom bombs were dropped on human beings at Nagasaki and Hiroshima, and by the time I was twenty-three years old my government and that of the Soviet Union had entered actively into the worst conflict of nerves in human history - the Cold War.
>
> I have lost friends and relatives through cancer, lynching and war. I have been personally the victim of physical attack which was the offspring of racial and political hysteria. I have worked with the handicapped

> and seen the ravages of congenital diseases that we have not yet conquered because we spend our time and ingenuity in far less purposeful wars. I have known persons afflicted with drug addiction and alcoholism and mental illness. I see daily on the stress of New York, street gangs and prostitutes and beggars. I have ... seen indescribable displays of man's very real inhumanity to man; I have come to maturity ... knowing that greed and malice and indifference to human misery, bigotry and corruption, brutality and, perhaps above all else, ignorance - the prime ancient and persistent enemy of man-abound in this world (1981, 11-12).

These radical events and varied life experiences formulated Hansberry's dramatic vision based on her conviction that the invasion of the AfroAmerican history through landscape, is what makes that history meaningful. The nature of her play texts show various levels of understanding and landscapic views. To critically consider them is to historically consider the fundamentals that go into their formation. Essential to these fundamentals are landscapic elements with varied dimensions that extend their mere utility as theatrical devices, to focus on the contemporary man's persistent search for self-definition, with the aim of socio-culturally overcoming the inward sense of futility. The aim is to arrive at a worthwhile goal in life where Arcadia is not restricted to a georgraphical location, but it extends to present an idyllic sense of existence.

Born and brought up in a world where "numerous violations of human rights", says Margaret Wilkerson, "brutality of the deep Southern variety, and labor protests filled the pages of freedom ... Hansberry gained

an education in politics, culture, and economics unparalleled in any university curriculum" (in Paul Jackson, 1992, 62).

Hansberry's tragic vision of man is a composite of her childhood experiences where she lived in the southside of Chicago, the most discriminating American city, particularly at the time of depression. In this connection, Wilkerson states:

> ...the roots of her (Hansberry's) philosophical views lie in Chicago, the place of her birth. Her childhood there held curious contradictions. On the one hand, she grew up in an upper-middle-class family; her father was a powerful realtor who built his fortune on the sale and rental of kitchenettes to relieve the crowded housing conditions of blacks. He won a supreme Court case against housing discrimination. Her mother, at one point a ward committee woman, helped to manage the buildings and tenants, but had plenty of time for the leisure-time activities typical of the bourgeoisie. The parents taught their four children pride in themselves and in the race, and nurtured in them the belief that their possibilities were (or should be in a fair society) limitless. On the other hand she lived in Chicago, a city of racial and ethnic barriers and boundaries .... Wealth may have freed her mind and spirit, but it could not free her colored body ... these conditions began to cultivate in the young Lorraine an utter abhorrence of racial discrimination and oppression (59-60)

A great deal of Hansberry's biography is fused in her delineation of her characters. "When she was eight years old", says Kelly Howes, "her family encountered hostility and violence when they moved into a segregated white Chicago neighborhood" (1995, 205), a notion dramatized in A Raisin in The Sun.

Hansberry was essentially influenced by Professor William Leo Hansberry, her uncle, of Howard university who was very much interested in developing the history of blacks. [4] She also knew a great deal about the history of blacks through Du Bois who taught her at the Jefferson School for Social Sciences in 1953 and whose book The Souls of Black Folk has an ample influence upon her as a person and as a young dramatist. [5] She skillfully managed to present such real and imaginative cityscapes as New York, Chicago, Africa, Europe and other third world countries. Hansberry was also influenced by such figures as Paul Roberson, the journalist for whom she worked in "Freedom", and by such black poets as Langston Hughes and Countee Cullen.

Both A Raisin In The Sun and Brustein, dramatize the characters' attachment to their environment or detachment from it. While all the landscapic elements that pertain to Chicago are dramatized in the first play, the socio-cultural and political aspects that relate to New York are revealed in the second. Both environment and the dramatic setting are integrated to positively reveal the inner workings of the characters.

The dramatic spectacle of A Raisin In The Sun is Chicago's Southside which appears as a malignant force. At the outset of the drama, the small amount of light that fights to find its path through the small window seems to be in agreement with the small amount of hope available for a Negro family filled with pride to move out of the slums and live in the sun. "The single window that has been provided for these "two rooms", says Hansberry, "is located in this kitchen area. The sole natural light the

family may enjoy in the course of a day is only that which fights its way through this little window" (1988, 24).

In A Raisin In The Sun, Hansberry "held the mirror up", says C.Y Groves, "not only to the surface of life but to the secret inner longings that every man and woman knows" (1979, 38). The authenticity of the drama lurks in its dramatic representation of the bitter frustrations of the Youngers in an attempt to achieve their American dream of comfortable life.

In their constant attempts to integrate into the world of the whites, the dramatic characters show an ambivalent attitude towards the landscape of Chicago. Sometimes, it is antagonistic as much as the American culture, shown in the white American community, is concerned. Sometimes, it is beneficial when the image of Africa and the African, exemplified in the character of Joseph Asagai, is pertinent. He reorchestrates the status of a group of liberal intellectuals with whom Hansberry mixed at Wisconsin university.

The title of A Raisin In The Sun was taken from Langston Hughes' poem, "Harlem" in which a dream deferred. Significantly, Robert Nemiroff quoted the poem in his most recent publication of the play as follows:

What happens to a dream deferred?
Does it dry up
Like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore-
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat
Or crust and sugar over-
Like a syrup sweet?

May be it just sags
Like a heavy load.
Or does it explode? (3).

Quoting Langston's poem suggests the Youngers' constant motivations to legitimately live as human beings. Lena Younger, who in many ways, stands for mother Africa, aspires to send her daughter Beneatha to a medical school and to buy a new house to move from the black slums. Walter Lee, her son, seeks to invest some of the money taken from his deceased father's insurance, in a liquor store, to be his boss and own it. In this way, he can dry up like a raisin in the sun.

The modernity of A Raisin In The Sun lurks, according to Robert Nemiroff, who participated in the production and adaptation of many of Lorraine's works since their marriage in 1953, in its treatment of such "concepts of African American beauty and identity; class and generational conflicts; the relationship of husbands and wives, black men and women; the outspoken (if then yet unnamed) feminism of the daughter ...) (6). Thus, the drama tackles issues that, though typical of their time, now they are topical of today's world.

A Raisin In The Sun is peopled with young and middle aged characters, a typical feature of Arcadia. Such characters are Walter, Ruth and Beneatha. Walter's inward sense of futility, which echoes in our minds via his psychic landscape of frustrations, is represented in the mediascape shown in the actual sounds of music that the audience heard and revealed in lighting as an instrument of uncovering the characters' perception of reality. He states:

> ... I'm thirty five years old; I been married eleven years and I got a boy who sleeps in the living room - (very very quietly) - and all I got to give him is stories about how rich white people live ... (34)

Travis, Walter's son, sleeping in the living room sofa, ensures Walter's failure, due to his inability to better the social conditions of his family, ironically, in the land of plenty.

Hansberry's varied landscapes which concretize the characters' inward fluctuations, their aspirations and their longing for self-recognition, are not only geographically experienced, but they are also dramatically visualized through such technological landscape devices as colour, light, décor, rituals, music and dancing. Imaginative representations of landscape are shown in Ruth's reference to Buckingham Palace and her wishful thinking to live in and also her mention of South Africa. Although many places are not actually experienced, they are mirrored through the imaginative faculties of characters.

Lena recalls her past dream that deferred through her psychic landscape which uncovers the Arcadian hope of having a house and a garden in the back. It is a long-waited-dream that deferred and when it came it was about to die away. Lena, who stands for the presence of a matriarch during the absence of the patriarch, recalls:

> I remember just as well the day me and Big Walter moved in here. Hadn't been married but two weeks and wasn't planning on living here no more than a year. (she shakes her head at the dissolved dream) (44).

By so doing, Hansberry adopted the contemporary literary feminist approach to literature in that she focuses on the importance of language not

just in discussing the interests of a class or in depicting the impact of social forces on the individual but in ensuring women's rights to explore their "own consciousness and develop new forms of expression", says Seldan, "corresponding to their values and consciousness" (1985, 146).

Whenever Lena is not in agreement with her son and daughter, due to generational gaps, she resorts to her plant, feeling a sense of unity with it. Her landscapic visualization of a garden, an Arcadian symbol of peace, love and order in opposition to this dreary view seen across the man-made landscape for which the window stands, is expressed in Lena's following words:

> ... I always wanted me a garden like I used to see sometimes at the back of the houses down home. This plant is close as I ever got to having one. (*she looks out the window as she replaces the plant*) Lord, ain't nothing as dreary as the view from this window on a dreary day, is there? Why ain't you singing this morning, Ruth? Sing that "No Ways Tired". (53)

Being fooled by the con man Willie Harries, for he does not know a great deal about the tricky ways of the world, Walter Lee is, in a sense, a noble savage who knows nothing about the world.

Asagai, the African scaper, though considered by critics as not being fairly examined for he did not pass through severe experiences, stands for the dreamy African who persistently attempts to attain his country's liberation and independence. He stands, in a sense, for Africa. Having that sense of place, Asagai stresses the inevitability for the African Americans to go back to their African roots if they aspire to find out their true identities. He ensures Hansberry's insistent explorations of the many –

sideness of the African identity and how it relates to the American Negroes who seek to fit in society. The African Americans' very sense of placelessness urges them to think of their roots, Africa, whether imagined or really experienced as a place. Unlike Asagai, who geographically lived in Africa, Beneatha's sense of Africa is based o her idea about the place rather than on experiencing the place itself.

To submerge her characters in the African landscape so as they can find out their roots, Hansberry implements African music, songs, dress and dancing. Music reveals the romantic elements of Africa referred to by Beneatha in Act II. Her experiences through the setting and her capacity to become a part of it are focused on through music that recalls to memory the sense of place. In this respect, Vanderbilt states:

> Place, like memory, grows more potent with distance, and a bit of conjured nostalgia can give invented or vicarious places startling reality and resonance beyond that of experienced places and can establish some psychic foothold ... in a world whose space and time are mediated by distant and unknowable forces (73).

Walter Lee's aspirations of future personal happiness through material success, which in many ways echoes Willy Loman's, are manifest in the representations of such natural landscape elements as the waters, the lands, the hills, the mountains and the sounds of birds. This is evident in his dialogue with Beneatha which is a composite of seascape, landscape and mountaineering.

Walter (*on the table, very far gone, his eyes pure glass sheets. He sees what we can not, that he is a leader of his people, a great chief, a*

descendant of Chaka, and that the hour to march has come) Listen, my black brothers-

Beneatha: OCOMOGOSIAY!

Walter: Do you hear the waters rushing against the shores of the coast lands-

Beneatha: OCOMOGOSIAY!

Walter : Do you hear the screeching of the chocks in younder hills beyond where the chief meet in council for the coming of the mighty war-

Beneatha: OCOMOGOSIAY!

(And now the lighting shifts subtly to suggest the world of Walter's imagination, and the mood shifts from pure comedy. It is the inner Walter speaking: the Southside chauffeur has assumed an unexpected mystery)

Walter: Do you hear the beating of the wings of the birds flying low over the mountains and the low places of our land-

Beneatha: OCOMOGOSIAY!

Walter : Do you hear the singing of the women, singing the war sons of our fathers to the babies in the great house? Singing the sweet war songs! (79)

A Raisin In The Sun discusses the AfroAmerican assimilationists' negative attitudes towards their African cultural heritage, a notion which is dramatically acted against by Hansberry through the dramatization of her characters' sense of place. The following dialogue reveals its characters' reactions towards their African roots shown in their conflicting views.

Ruth: Why must you and your brother make an argument out of everything people say?

Beneatha: Because I hate assimilationist Negreos!

Ruth: Will somebody please tell me what assimila-whoever means!

George: Oh, it's just a college girl's way of calling people Uncle Toms- but that isn't what it means at all.

Ruth : Well, What does it mean?

Beneatha: (*Cutting George off and staring at him as she replies to Ruth*) It means someone who is willing to give up his own culture and submerge himself completely in the dominant, and in this case oppressive culture!

George: Oh, dear, dear, dear! Here we go! A lecture on the African past! On our Great West African Heritage! I one second we will hear all about the great Ashanti empires; the great Songhay civilizations; and the great sculpture of Benin- and then some poetry in the Bantu-and the whole monologue will end with the world *heritage*! (*Nastily*) Let's face it, baby, your heritage is nothing but a bunch of raggedy-assed spirituals and some grass huts!

Beneatha: GRASS Huts ! .. See there ... you are standing there in your splendid ignorance talking about people who were the first to smelt iron on the face of the earth! ... The Ashanti were performing surgical operations when the English ... were still tattooing themselves with blue dragons! (81) This part of the dialogue entails a sense of looking back in anger at the dominant American regime.

To Walter, the Southside of Chicago is a prison which shows his negative reaction to the cityscape implied in his constant withdrawal outside the city. This is revealed in his talk with Lena:

> ... you don't know all the things a man what got leisure can find to do in this city ... What's this - Friday night? Well - Wednesday I borrowed Willy Harris' car and I went for a drive ... just me and myself and I drove and drove ... Way out ... way past south Chicago, and I parked the car and I sat and looked at the steel mills all day long. I just sat in the car and looked at them big black chimneys for hours. Then I drove back and I went to the Green Hat. (Pause) And today -today I didn't get the car. Today I just walked. All over the Southside. And I looked at the negroes and they looked at me and finally I just sat down the curb at thirty-ninth and south Parkway and I just sat there and watched the Negroes go by ... (105)

Walter's dream of material success through making a liquor store is revealed to his son, Travis who serves, according to Kelly Howes, "as the repository of the family's proud heritage and hope for the future" (1995, 207).

Offering Lena a set of garden tools, symbol of fertility, as a present from her family suggests the importance of gardening as an essential aspect of Arcadia in that it stands for peace of mind, love and tolerance. Similarly, Travis offered Lena a hat which symbolizes protection and implies the necessity of preserving the African cultural heritage.

Both Beneatha and Asagai stand for the younger generation in a journey into the interior for a better image of the world. Their future aspirations are expressed through revealing their psychic landscape which corresponds with their attitude towards the world and the peoples. While Beneatha aspires to be a doctor to cure people physically and to do away with their body hurts, Asagai seeks to remedy the social illusions of the

postcolonial Africa. "Critics feel", says Kelly Howes, "that Asagai embodies the ebullient pride and optimism that marked the early years of the post-colonial period" (208).

Beneatha's promising view is revealed to Asagai in her following words:

> That that was what one person could do for another, fix him up-sew up the problem. Make him all right again. That was the most marvelous thing in the world ... I wanted to do that. I always thought it was the one concrete thing in the world that a human being could do. Fix up the sick, you know- and make them whole again ... (133)

However, when Beneatha's future aspirations of becoming a doctor are shattered, due to Walter's loss of money, Beneatha states:

An end to misery! To stupidity! Don't you see there isn't any real progress, Asagai, there is only one large circle that we march in, around and around, each of us with our own little picture in front of us-our little mirage that we think is the future.

> Asagai: That is the mistake.
>
> Beneatha: What?
>
> Asagai: What you just said about the circle. It isn't a circle-it is simply a long line- as in geometry, you know, one that reaches in to infinity-And because we can not see the end - we also can not see how it changes. And it is very odd but those who see the changes-who dream, who will not give up-are called idealists ... and those who only see the circle we call them the "realists"!

Beneatha Asagai, while I was sleeping in that bed in there, people went out and took the future right out of my hands! And nobody asked me, nobody consulted me-they just went out and changed my life!

Asagai: Was it your money?

Beneatha : What?

Asagai: Was it your money he gave away?

Beneatha: It belonged to all of us.

Asagai : But did you earn it? Would you have it at all if your father had not died?

Beneatha : No.

Asagai : Then isn't there something wrong in a house - in a world-where all dreams, good or bad, must depend on the death of a man? (134-5)

Asagai's Arcadia locates in Africa, in his moving back home educating and enlightening his native villagers. In his answer to Beneatha's questions: 'Where are we all going and why are we bothering!, Asagai says:

> … My dear, young creature of the New World- I do not mean across the city- I mean across the ocean: home-to Africa (136)

And Beneatha questions:

> Asagai Nigeria. Home (*Coming to her with genuine romantic flippancy*) I will show you our mountains and our stars; and give you cool drinks from gourds and teach you the old songs and the ways of our people - and, in time, we will pretend that - (*Very softly*)- you have only been away for a day - say that you'll come … (137)

Thus, Asagai's psychic landscape embodied in his deep attachment to his roots feeds up his visualization of the African natural landscape.

Ruth's sense of place entails her insistent desire for liberation from the constant feeling of being discriminated and looked down upon. Realizing that Lena is about to give up, Ruth tries to convince her to continue her future plan saying:

> Lena - I'll work ... I'll work twenty hours a day in all the kitchens in Chicago ... I'll strap my baby on my back if I have to and scrub all the floors in America and wash all the sheets in America if I have to - but we got to Move! We got to get out of Here!! (140)

The youngers' final decision is to move out to a white neighbourhood in spite of all the hostilities and enmities that they might encounter.

A Raisin In The sun ends with a natural landscape element which is dramatically suggestive. Lena is seen taking "a final desperate look, pulls her coat about her, pats her hat and goes out. The lights dim down. The door opens and she comes back in, grabs her plant, and goes out for the last time" (151)

While A Raisin In The Sun, as its title suggests, centres around the Southside of Chicago both with its geographical areas and all the elements that pertain to its landscape, Brustein as its title implies, rotates around identity and the individual in relation to the Greenwich village of New York city. This transformation in the theatrical implementation of such elements of music, lighting and dance marks Hansberry's changing perception towards it as she constantly, moves to explore, discuss and

comment. According to her "the compelling obligation of the Negro writer, as a writer and citizen of life, is participation in the intellectual affairs of all men, everywhere. The foremost enemy of the Negro intelligentsia of the past has been and in a large sense remains -isolation" (3). Hansberry proceeds to pinpoint that the Negro writer should not work under the impression that "he will exempt from the artistic examination of questions which plague the intellect and spirit of man" (3). Perhaps this is what motivated Hansberry to widen the scope of her landscapic vision to include the whites' search for self-definition.

Brustein centres around the protagonist's quest for self knowledge as a sound step to better understand the world. The drama focuses on Sidney's socio-psychological development through his adoption or discarding of ideals all the time that gradually lead him up to his final self-realization through his recognition of the nature of life. The play is an overcrowded panorama of multicultural and ethnic characters seeking recognition and self-assertion.

Sidney's preference of solitude is in tune with his inward desire for more ordered and less complicated world. This is signaled in his occasional playing on his Banjo, a further example of technological landscape.

As a cityscape, New York represents a corner stone upon which the dramatist brings into the dramatic setting as many characters as possible. It is a metaphor of people's constant attempts to strongly reject the socio-political restrictions that the cityscape imposes upon them. [6]

Whenever Sidney feels disappointed, he escapes, in a Thoreauseque manner, to the wilderness through his imaginative transformation of setting. His visual attachment to the mountain areas is realized both by the surrounding characters and by the audience as well. Sidney's withdrawal to the woods is typically Emersonian as well. In his dialogue with Wally, Sidney shows his enthusiastic spirit to go forlorn I nature:

> .... Hey, honey, you know what I fell like? I am suddenly suffering from an all-consuming desire to take my books, my cameras, my records, and ---my wife -- and go ---Iris, Alton and Wally (Together, in union) - up to the woods! (1965-26)

Stressing this characteristic feature of Sidney's character that has to do with the natural representation of landscape, Alton states, in directing his words to Wally:

> Man, you see what we are up against here? This clown is not only committed to the symbolic mountain tops. He goes in *for the whole real live physical thing*. (27)

Referring to a book Sidney read on Thoreau, Alton, the only Afro-American young man in the drama, sees that Sidney admires the wrong parts of the book for he indulged in minute descriptions of the natural elements. In this respect, Wally comments:

> ... how's about the rest of Thoreau, Sidney boy? How's about the Thoreau of sublime social consciousness, the Thoreau who was standing in jail one day when that holy of holies, Mr. Ralph Waldo Emerson, comes strolling by and asks, "Well, Henry, what are you doing in there?" and Thoreau, who was "in there" for protesting the evils of his day, looked out at him and said -- The question is, Ralph, what are you doing ... (30)

Brustein proceeds to trace, through varied landscape elements "Sidney's personal Odyssey", says Wilkerson, "toward self-realization and affirmation of his responsibility to engage and act in this world" (65). The critic proceeds to describe the landscaper's centrality of the dramatic action as being "educated to his own chauvinism, intolerance, and self-indulgence by three sisters who actively present a tapestry of women victimized by this society" (65) The three Parodus sisters Iris, Mavis and Gloria, who are Greek in origin, therefore considered by Wally, as having the seeds of tragedy in their souls, stand for humanity at large suffering depression, oppression and darkness. [7]

Along with his affinity with nature either through imagination or through actual experience, Sidney implements music, the mediascape, as an avenue of withdrawal from the situations that are impregnated with conflicts and tensions. Whenever Sidney feels at a loss he resorts to play on his Banjo, symbol of an ordered way of thinking. He sometimes addresses his wife Iris to come and dance for him. "Dance for me Iris Parodus", says Sidney, "Come down out of the hills and dance for me mountain Girl" (47). Through his visualization of a natural landscape, Sidney is no longer in the city. The Iris of his mind, unlike the Iris of the city who distastes his fantasy, appears dancing for him.

This characteristic feature reveals Sidney's thorough involvement, at least for a while, with the natural landscape which feeds up his psychic landscape. Sidney's following dialogue with Iris shows his affinity with nature.

Sidney ... Listen ! Do you hear the brook? There is nothing like clear brook water at daybreak. And when you drink it gives back your own image.

Iris (charmed in spite of herself) You'll catch cold, Sidney.

It's too early for games. Come to bed.

Sidney No, Iris. Come up. (She does as he speaks; and, finally kneels beside him) Look at the pines -- look at the goddamn pines. You can taste and feel the scent of them. And if look down, down through the mist, you will make out the thin line of dawn far distant. There's not another soul for miles, and if you listen, really listen -- you might almost hear yourself think (72)

Unlike Sidney, Iris who imaginatively aspires to fuse with nature distastes the woods. She prefers to go back to the city. Sidney, the landscaper, attempts in an Emersonian romantic way to persuade Iris, the cityscaper, to integrate with nature. This is revealed in their following dialogue:

Sidney (Looking around) Coming here makes me believe that the planet is mine again. In this primeval sense. Man and earth and earth and man and all that. You know. That we have just been born, the earth and me, and are just starting out. There is no pollution, not hurt; just me and this hall of minerals and gases suddenly shot together out of the cosmos.

Iris (Looking at him, head titled puppy style, mouth ajar) Jees.

Sidney I love you very much.

(They are quiet; he lifts his banjo and plays a little.

Then it is still. After a long beat:)

Iris Take me back to the city, please Sid.

(He gets up and puts his banjo over his shoulder and takes her hand and they start down the steps -- while at the same time the magic that's Sidney's World fades and the lighting returns to

normal. A passing truck guns its motor and day breaks on the city (76-77)

Because of their constant troubles, due to their mutual misunderstanding of life, both Sidney and Iris violently confront each other, a dramatic situation which, in a sense, reverberates Ibsen's A Doll's House.

Iris (Exploding, near tears) I have learned a lot after five years of life with you, Sidney! When I met you I thought Kant was a stilted way of saying can not; I thought Puccini was a kind of spaghetti; I thought the louder an actor yelled and fell out on the floor the greater he was. But you taught me to look deeper and harder. At everything: from Japanese painting to acting ....

Sidney (Going after her) Iris, Iris, just listen --

Iris (Facing him. Resolutely; she will not be stopped) All I know is that from now on I just want something to happen in my life.

I don't much care what. Just something. (88-9)

It is through psychic landscape, that reveals the characters' states of mind and shows their attitude towards social reality that Sidney's concept of the human race is expressed through his inward reaction to the human situation.

Sidney Man! The human race! Yesterday he made a wheel, and fire, so today we're all demanding to know why he hasn't made universal beauty and wisdom and truth too! (99)

In Brustein, it is realized that the overall dramatic effect of landscape is apparent in the psychotic deterioration and utter depression. This is dramatically evident in Sidney's concrete representation of dark landscape versus light landscape.

Sidney (Roaring drunk, as it were) Stop it .... Let there be darkness ... Let the tides of night fall upon us and envelop us and protect us from the light ... Shut it out, shut out the light ... How do you like them apples, Goethe, old baby? Let there be darkness, I say! Let there be darkness, I say! Out, I say! (The recognizing her) Gloria (121)

Claiming that she is a model girl while, in reality, she is a call girl, Gloria lies on Alton and as a result he breaks his engagement. This event shattered Sidney's illusions who avoids light and asks to sleep in utter darkness.

The symbolic significance of the sign in the window varies according to the characters' mood. It has various levels of understanding. Sometimes it stands for varying and daring views. It is also a way out from the circularity that Sidney lives in. sometimes Iris regards it as a vulgar thing, a spit in Sidney's face. Iris implements the sign to reveal "Sidney's "limits of his knowledge and authority" (10). As an aspect of man-made landscape, the sign in the window marks Sidney's sense of anger, which relates to his constant misunderstanding of his wife. Whenever he feels agitated, Sidney resorts to the window watching people come and go.

In Brustein, death, which is an essential feature of the Arcadian landscape, anchors the human situation, betters man's psyche and forces the human soul to confess its deeply repressed feelings. Towards the end of the play, Gloria's suicide leads to an acute sense of futility and an overall feeling of guilt and despair that hovered over the natural and the man-made landscape of Sidney's apartment. In the end, Sidney realizes that:

> .... A fool who believes that death is waste and love is sweet and that the earth turns and men change every day and that rivers run

and that people wanna be better than they are and that flowers smell good and that I hurt terribly today, and that hurt is desperation and desperation is -- energy and energy can move things ... (142)

Due to Gloria's death, Sidney's gradual realistic consideration of life terminates in his self-definition. He comes into a full awareness that "if you want to survive you've got to swing the way the world swings!" (138)

Towards the end of Brustein Wally O'Hara asks Sidney to go away with his books and banjos to the mountains where he actually belongs. It is a straightforward recognition of how important and essential the natural landscape is in anchoring the human spirit and in airing the deeply repressed feelings. It is an invitation that deepens man's nostalgia for more disciplined and ordered Arcadias, symbols of man's self-examination. Addressing Sidney, Wally states "... there ought to be a lesson in it for you: Stay up in the mountains with your banjos and your books where you belong" (140).

After Gloria's death, Sidney recognizes that he strongly needs to go back to his wife. To symbolically do away with the painful image of the past, Iris strongly shut the bathroom door where Gloria died. Both Sidney's and Iris's reconciliation is achieved through ventilating their deeply repressed feelings expressed in weeping.

Sidney Yes ... weep now darling, weep. Let us both weep. That is the first thing: to let ourselves feel again ... then tomorrow, we shall make something strong of the sorrow ..

(They sit spent, almost physically drained and motionless ... as the clear light of the morning gradually fills the room) (143)

Thus, Lorraine Hansberry's philosophy of landscaping is in tune with her dramatic ends. Walter, Ruth, Brustein, Iris, Beneatha and Asagai are dwellers of an unspoiled innocent Arcadia. In a sense, they stand for humanity at large seeking perfection in a world governed by materialism. For instance Beneatha is capable of exploring her African heritage thanks to Asagai, who offers her African clothing and music. He is there in the drama to state that people such as Beneatha should not leave the course of their lives to "accidents" as Kelly Howes so rightly stressed.

Comparing and contrasting the two plays in question in connection with the landscape, one realizes that the theme is not restricted to the Afro-Americans seeking self-definition but it extends to include the whites as well reprsented in the characters of Sidney, Iris, Mavis and Gloria who manage, through their gradual realization of the nature of life, to achieve self-recognition. It is also observed that when Karl Lindner is perhaps the only white character in A Raisin in The Sun, Alton Scales is the only black character in Brustein.

Hansberry's manipulation of Arcadian landscapes in her dramas stresses the importance of the continuity of human race via captivating the human mind to absorb larger dreams that seek harmony with a healthy environment thus achieving the reconciliation of man with man.

Though they are chauvinists in their attitudes towards women, particularly their oppressed wives, both Walter and Sidney prove to be, in a sense, noble savages in their naïve reactions to social realities. While Walter is deceived by Willy Harris who, by disappearing with Walter's

money, destroys his dream of personal happiness, Sidney is intellectually fooled by Wally's political illusions implied in his political slogans.

Essential to the dramatic implications of the Arcadian landscapes in the two plays in question is Hansberry's introduction of an overcrowded panorama of places and multicultural and ethnic characters both actual and dramatic expressed in theatrical media and technological scapes that ensure her positive approach to the world. The Arcadian aspects bind the self with the non-self, the part with the whole and the interior with the exterior.

Since man is Hansberry's major preoccupation (not just the blacks) landscapes are implemented not as mere theatrical devices but they positively contribute to the human situation for they manifest man's unexplored potentials. For instance, Sidney's withdrawal from the cityscape far away from its madding crowd is related to his own concept of the wilderness as a symbol of freedom versus the city as an image of man-made evil.

In fine, while the metaphor of the sun in A Raisin in The Sun stands for growth, maturity and hope, the clear light that comes out through Sidney's window exposes him to severe examination. In addition, the dramatic spectacle of Chicago and New York expands the physicality of its setting to highlight the characters' untapped capabilities.

Notes

1- For more detailed treatment of Arcadia, its historical development and its implementation in literature see: Jean Charles Seigneuret et

al, Dictionary of Literary Themes and Motifs A.J. (New York: Green press, 1988) pp. 257-64.

2- For further information about the American Wilderness, its literary usage and historical development see: Roderick Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971).

3- For the discussion of landscape, especially of various wild American areas and their representation in literature see: Jean Charles Seigneuret, Dictionary of Literary Themes and Motifs L. Z. (New York: Greenwood press 1988) pp. 1005-9.

4- In 1925, as obviously stressed in his Africa and Africans As Seen by Classical Writers, Leo Hansberry sponsored a symposium at Howard university entitled: "Cultures and Civilizations of Negro peoples in Africa". He stressed pan-Africanism for which he exerted efforts to support in the 1920s. for highlighting this notion, Joseph Harris, in his Preface to Leo Hansberry's aforementioned book, states: "Hansberry not only believed that blacks should commit themselves more fully to the writing of their own history, but they should pursue a pan Africanist approach by virtue of the common origin and historical experiences of the Africans "at home and abroad" (Washington: Howard University Press, 1977) p. XI

5- In his The Souls of Black Folk, Du Bois discusses the American Negro, his problems, his aspirations and the socio-political issues that relate to freedom, justice and equality. He also pinpoints the blacks' struggle for attaining self-realization. Du Bois focuses on the theory of the negro's double consciousness due to his "twoness", says Du Bois, "an American, a negro, two souls, two thoughts, two unreconcilied strivings, two warring ideals in one dark body" (New York: New American Library, 1982) p. 45. The uniqueness of Du Bois' book lurks in that although it was published in the early years of this century, it predicted the contemporary racial conflicts that afflict the American society.

6- For further detailed discussion of the literary setting and characters as elements of the socio-psychological and natural landscape and also of the regional landscape versus the global landscape see:

Andrew Enstice, Thomas hardy: Landscape of the Mind, (London: Macmillan press LTD, 1979).

7- Of the importance of landscape, of the biographical element and its dynamic function in nourishing the writer's poetic vision and in increasing the integrity between the individual and his environment see: John Sandford, Landscape and Landscape Imagery in R.M. Rilke (Institute of Germanic Studies: University of London, 1980).

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The Journey in Two of Harold Pinter's Memory Plays: Old Times and No Man's Land

The theme of the journey in literature has been a perennial motif from very early times. It has motivated contemporary writers to adopt with the aim of discussing the negative impact of time on man. Hence, the journey, is dealt with an objective correlative to mirror various human experiences.

Within this context, this paper tackles the journey in two of Harold Pinter's memory plays (2): Old Times (1971) and No Man's Land (1975), depending on Michel Foucault's interest in the power of discourse as a pivot of human activity and on Jonathan Culler's focus on the reader's role in interpreting the literary work rather than regarding the rules that control the writing of the text and its referents (3). The aim is to trace the characters' journeying through time with the help of memory to assert their existence, following interdisciplinarity as method of research.

Pinter, like Strindberg, Chekhov, Pirandello and O'Neill, follows Ibsen's path in his adoption of the theme of the protagonist as artist with the aim of revealing his central character's anxieties and anguish, thus providing the audience with the opportunity to see things as they really are. Centrality of the Pinterian protagonist as artist is manifest in The Birthday Party where Stanley is a pianist; in Old Times where Deeley claims to be a film director and in No Man's Land where Hirst says that he is a poet.

Pinter's adoption of the problem of communication and the quest for identity, which are fundamental absurdist themes, necessitated the use

of journeys actual or imaginary to reveal the characters' inward fluctuations in their constant fight against certain invisible forces. They travel into explored and unexplored areas of the mind with their ultimate need to feel that they are at one with the self and consequently with their social reality. "Pinter's characters", says Lois Gordon, "often say one thing but really feel and often communicate another" (in K.A. Berney 1994, 573).

The characters' continuous travel through time, with the purpose of attempting to make sense of the chaos of their experiences, is one of the dramatic methods that Pinter adopted in Old Times and No Man's Land, where the dramatic influence of Joyce's Exiles and Proust's Remembrance of Things Past, is quite conspicuous [4].

Pinter's focus on the intellectuals as dramatic characters relegates his plays to Martin Esslin's trend of the absurd which "may provide", says Esslin, "a new language, new ideas, new approaches, and a new vitalized philosophy to transform the modes of thought and feeling of the public at large in a not too distant future" (1968, 13). However, Pinter's dramatic vision is not confined to the content of his plays but he stresses certain theatrical devices that imply certain dramatic significations. Also, Pinter's adoption of absurdist themes necessitated an awareness of the "current tendencies of thought in other fields", says Esslin, "or at least show how a new convention of this sort reflects the changes in science, psychology, and philosophy that have been taking place in the last half century" (14).

Depending on Raman Selden's adoption of Gadamer's view in that the meaning of the text "does not pop into the world, as a finished and neatly parceled bundle of meaning", and claiming that "meaning depends

on the historical situation of the interpreter" (1985, 111-112), it would be argued that one of the motivations of Pinter's characters' journeying through time links with the implementation of journey as an alternative method of communication. In their attempts to communicate, they struggle to recall their past experiences, triggered by memory, to throw light on their present conditions.

The characters travel back and forth, to arrive at a relativized image of their social reality. The aim is to elicit, in spite of the chaos of their experiences, their inward fluctuations. In this connection, Alan Sinfield states:

> The horror in Pinter's plays derives from this conception. People, like animals, fight for territory ... the difference, according to ethologists, is that animals use signals so that the weaker withdraws unhurt, whereas people fight to the death, physically or psychologically. In Pinter's plays the defeated character is destroyed: in his vie human investment in territory is not just for material support, it involves consciousness, the self, (1983, 98-99).

As long as characters are verbally active, they "tell themselves endless stories", says Alan Sinfield, "to explain who they are, but they always break down, the agony of consciousness remains" (11). Space and silence, concretized in the characters' presence in small dark rooms and isolated areas, are indicatives of the characters' existence as prisoners of time.

That constant sense of menace and fear which hovers round the Pinteresque characters' world has, in a sense, its reminiscenes in Pinter's

social upbringing in a Jewish cultural background which represents a scared and unstable minority in East London. However, on widening the scope of his grisly vision through crystallizing his socio-cultural affiliations, Pinter is consistent with Roland Barthes' view in that the author is not the origin and source of the text and the reader is free to tackle the text from any angle that provides him/her with pleasure (5).

The image of the room stands for Pinter's vision of his character's ultimate search for socio-cultural security. In his plays in general and in Old Times and No Man's Land in particular, the room symbolizes safety, warmth and shelter from any outside malignant force. Spooner rightly regards it as his "only security ad his true comfort and solace" (Pinter 1975, 17).

When in an interview with Tynan, cited in Esslin's The Theatre of the Absurd, Pinter was asked "what his two people in his room are afraid of," he answered, "obviously they are scared of what is outside the room. Outside the room there is a world bearing upon them which is frightening. I am sure it is frightening to you and me as well" (266).

However, in the rooms of Pinter's characters, there always comes an intruder to disrupt their stability. "The commonplace room", in Lois' view, "becomes the violent scene of mental and physical breakdown" (573). To compensate for this frightening image of the stranger, Lois sees that characters "project on to the stranger their deepest fears" (573). Intruders are part of Pinter's technique to force his characters to reveal their true identities. The characters' reticence and reluctance to present much

details about their past experiences, and their continual fights for territorial dominance, represent their ceaseless quest for finding a way for living.

Nothing is fixed in Pinter's dramatic world. Therefore, characters do not stick to one narrative of their past or present experiences, for the past and the present intersect in ways that they turn to be a matter of life or death. In Old Times and No Man's Land the characters escape to the past to elicit and emphasize their inner fight and strenuous struggle. Pinter's philosophical vision of life shown in his plays in general and in the plays in question in particular is revealed in an interview quoted by Esslin. He states:

> Life is funny because it is arbitrary, based on illusions and self-deception, like Stanley's dream that he is going on a world tour as a pianist, because it is built out of pretense and the grotesque overestimation each individual makes of himself. But in our present-day world, everything is uncertain and relative. There is no fixed point; we are surrounded by the unknown. And the fact that is verging on the unknown leads us to the next step which seems to occur in my plays. There is a kind of horror about and I think that this horror ad absurdity go together (273).

Old Times and No Man's Land dramatize Pinter's vision which uncomfortably deprives us of our illusions that we understand other people and that we really understand ourselves. "We can not understand other people", John Russell Taylor argues, "we can not even understand ourselves; and the truth of any situation is almost always beyond our grasp" (1969, 356). Taylor proceeds to rhetorically ask: "If this is true in life, why should it not be true in the theatre?" (356). Pinter strenuously

strives to theatrically achieve that end in Old Times and No Man's Land in the dramatization of time and space and their psychological impact upon the individual. Old Times resembles Joyce's Exiles. Pinter, like Joyce, follows the realist dramatic tradition. "Knowing and wanting to know lead into 'not knowing' in Exiles", says Katharine Worth, "as in all Pinter's plays, though here Joyce's method separates and starts to look more like the expository method of the realism of his time" (1972, 51).

The interdependence of time past and time present which dominates the dramatic action of Old Times offers a key to the discussion of the problems of man and the experiences which have shaped his bleak vision. It is the theme of time as the drama's title entails, which stimulates social, cultural and philosophical discussions. In this connection, Bernard Dukore states:

> Characters in Old Times discuss old times: such as what the woman did and whom they saw when they were roommates, the first meeting between husband and wife, and a flirtation at a party. They even sing old songs. Anna's opening speech is a profusion of memories (1985, 90).

At the outset of the drama, Kate and Deeley recall their past experiences by descending into the depths of the self. However, less reliability is given to memory, for as an element of reality, it only presents, due to time, a deformed relative form of it. In Old Times, "memory and intruders", says Anderson, "have reached such a level of identification that it becomes meaningless to ask whether Anna, Kate's old friend on a flying visit, 'exists' or is merely a figment of the memory-patterns that compose the play" (1976, 107). By giving Anna a subjective leading role, Pinter

seems to agree with Jacques Lacan's approach in that "human subjects", says Selden, "enter a pre-existing system of signifiers which take on meanings only within a language system" (81) a notion that connects with the verbal violent use of language in specific ways to politically oppress people. This is dramatized in Mountain Language (1988), which "treats the oppression of an unnamed people", says Lois, "in an unspecified totalitarian state for the crime of retaining their own (mountain) language" (576).

The credibility of Old Times' dramatic action lies only in remembering things that might not have happened but the very remembering of them provides them with concrete reality. Discussing the hero of the film "Odd Man Out", Anna says:

> I never met Robert Newton but I do know I know what you mean. There are some things one remembers even though they may never have happened. There are things I remember which may never have happened but as I call them so they take place (1971, 31-32).

Anna's dialogue reveals her struggle for possession through journeying into the past to achieve self-assertion, relying on the amount of knowledge she could recall. Pinter's dependence on the strange reversibility of the characters' roles viably reveals the quality of the characters' remembered experiences. In this regard, Austen Quigely states:

> The activity of conversation in a Pinter play is a voyage of discovery. Facts, opinions, hypotheses, etc. are not given simply to transmit objective information, they are used for particular purposes. An essential purpose is to create and confirm a mutual sense of reality .... In the Pinter world, the exploration and confirmation of

> relationships is the central focus of the verbal activity of the characters. On it hinges their capacity not to achieve public goals whether social, political or religious, but basically to confirm their estimate of their own identity and to survive (66).

Unlike Anna, Kate is almost always silent. If Anna stands for speech, Kate stands for silence as a metaphysical aspect of journey. She lives in a dreamy world of her own, motivated by her preference to live in the country, revealed in her following words:

> Everything's softer. The water, the light, the shapes, the sounds. There aren't such edges here. And living close to the sea too. You can't say where it begins or ends. That appeals to me. I don't care for harsh lines. I deplore that kind of urging (59).

Just as in Landscape where Duff moves in an isolated sort of experience with the help of his memory-patterns to share Beth's experience through music and gardening, Pinter, in Old Times, "explores the theme of memory and its relation to reality", says Alan Hughes, "the past is so important that very little seems to happen in the present; the relationships between the three characters alter in time with their differing and fluctuating memories of the past" (1974, 457).

Deeley's and Kate's opening dialogue of Old Times reveals their constant struggle to unveil, through memory, their past experiences. Deeley, being a victim of some indefinite and mysterious fears, attempts to probe into the world of women through his dialogue with his wife Kae. Deeley expects a visit by Anna, Kate's friend. The following dialogue between him and Kate spotlights on this visit:

Deeley

Was she your best friend

Kate

Oh, what does that mean

Deeley

What?

The word friend ... then you look back ... all that time.

Deeley

Can't you remember what you felt.

Kate

It is a very long time.

Deeley

But you remember her. She remembers you, or why would she be coming here tonight?

Kate

I suppose because she remembers me.

Pause. (8-9).

The vague and rather ambiguous appearance of Anna in darkness, at the beginning of the play, and the obsolete language she uses, reveal the coming of a rather figure from the past whose language as well as emotions are quite alien to us. In a sense, Anna is a woman, coming from the past, attempting to belong to the present. And the way she appears stretching out her body in the last dramatic scene of the plays suggests the fading and the dying of that past.

As the dramatic action of Old Times progresses, the focus is on the creative act for it is essential for Pinter to stress the conflict between Kate and Deeley. But to make sure that Anna was only an image of Deeley's and Kate's imaginative faculties, Kate, towards the end of the play, remembers that Anna has died and she recalls her image lying dead in her room. Conflict changes, as its subject changes, due to the nature of the transformations of the characters' roles. In this respect, Kalson states:

> .... The central conflict in Old Times shifts as points of view change: if Anna exists, she and Deeley are antagonists battling to possess Kate; if she does not exist, the antagonists in Old Times are Deeley and Kate, man and mate vying for dominance in tenuous relationship (1979, 341).

Anna's use of such unfamiliar words as "lest" and "gaze" which, according to Deeley, are no longer in use at present, proves that the past is not existent until it has been formulated and uncovered through memory. Deeley's remarkable reaction to Anna's language is obvious in the following dialogue:

> Anna
>
> I would not want to go far, I would be afraid of going far lest when I returned the house would be gone.
>
> Deeley
>
> Lest?
>
> Anna
>
> What?
>
> Deeley

> The word lest. Haven't heard it for a long time (1971, 19).

Commenting on this part of the dialogue, Katharine Worth elucidates:

> In the process of investigation, the friend makes a mysteriously sudden appearance to take her part in it - the memories of all three tangle and merge in such a way that it becomes difficult for us, as for her husband, to separate what is said about one woman from what is said about the other. At times the wife, Kate, seems to fade out. At other times it is the husband who appears not to exist: the women's memories take them into an intimacy so deep that it is hardly possible to see them any more as separate beings; they complement each other, seeing to make up a whole, perhaps the woman the husband thinks or wants to think he has married (49).

In Old Times, due to the heavy burden of time, things are mixed up. Characters relate different accounts of the same events. They cannot differentiate between one time and another, a typically Proustian technical device. The past has no objective existence for it is the product of a subjective memory at present. The characters' narratives legitimately root Pinter's theatrical world in their very real social and psychological conditions. In this connection, Alan Hughes states:

> The dramatic tensions of Old Times center upon the discrepancies between different accounts of events which are supposed to have occurred twenty years in the past. Have Deeley and Anna met before. If so, which version of their meeting is true? Did Deeley meet Kate alone at the cinema or did the two girls see the film together? Who was the sobbing man Anna remembers, and why did he lie across Kate's lap? What does Kate

> mean when she remembers Anna dead? We can expect no objective answers because none exist. If the past is real only in so far as it is remembered in the present, then all accounts, are true. Thus Pinter's characters can alter their memories in response to the requirements of their conflicts in the present (468).

In connection with events at present, the role of memory is relative as long as characters attempt to avoid conflict. After a pause, which dramatically represents a go between the past and the present, Anna says:

> One day she said to me, I've slept through Friday. No you haven't. I said, what do you mean? I've slept right through Friday, she said. But today is Friday, I said, it's been Friday all day, it's now Friday night, you haven't slept through Friday. Yes I have, she said, I've slept right through it, today is Saturday 925).

This repetitive use of words, which implies the absurdity of the human condition, entails the characters' unawareness of the movement of time. In this respect, Kalson maintains:

> Locked in struggle with Deeley over the possession of Kate's past, the wedge into Kate's present, Anna suggests that man's usual view of himself moving forward in the flux of time is merely wishful thinking. Unexpectedly the present shapes the past, for memory may indeed be imagination (34).

In Old Times, two types of journey are dramatically implemented. One is the actual journey of characters from one place to another as in the case of Anna, who traveled from Italy to visit her close friend Kate in England, after twenty years of absence. A further example of an actual journey is connected with Deeley's work. He says:

> My work took me to Sicily. My work concerns itself with life all over, you see, in every part of the globe. With people all over the globe. I use the word globe because the world possesses emotional, political, sociological and psychological pretentions and romances which I prefer as a matter of choice to do without (40-41).

The another type of journey links with the characters' inward journeying through time to explore their past experiences. For instance, in her talk with Kate, Anna says:

> Don't tell me you've forgotten our days at the Tate? And how we explored London and all the old churches and all the old buildings, I mean those that were left from the bombing in the city and south of the river in Lambeth and Greenwich? Oh my goodness. Oh yes. And the Sunday papers! I could never get her away from the view pages (38).

In Old Times not all that characters say or do can be taken for granted or totally believable. Their sudden moves from one subject to another, which either relate to the past or to the present, enable them to communicate through their verbal activities which make them get in touch with a relative image of their social reality. In this respect, Almansi states:

> You can trust his - [Pinter's] characters neither when they are talking to others nor when they are talking to themselves: this is what makes Landscape, Old Times, No Man's Land such different plays. Characters shift position crab-live move forward like knights on a chess-board an oblique tentative step rather than a bold progress (80).

As far as the notion of time is in question in Old Times, the three characters have past and present. Although characters show their

antagonistic spirit against memory through providing various versions of their past, memory works as an objective correlative that provides them with that sense of being alive at present. In this respect, Stephen Martineau states:

> The strong difference and the added tension in Old Times is that the past becomes a competitive arena, a matter of life and death. The way into the past is again through individual memory, but this time there are those around who can dispute that memory by setting up alternate versions of the past (1973, 292).

While the journey is implemented to discuss the characters' behaviour through their continual activities, memory is used to set up the dramatic setting through narrative with its tools of memory and fantasy. In this respect, Morrison states:

> This breathless rush of memory sets a scene, establishes characters and suggests various events, all which will develop into a more specific narrative as the play proceeds. The passage ends with an important question: 'does it still exist?' It does, indeed, and the play will show how narrative (both memory units and fantasies) make the existence of the past possible in the present (1983, 192-193).

It is through the various narrative representations of the characters' dramatic past that Pinter manages, in Vladimir Propp's sense, to recognize his hero or heroine's existence [(6)]. For instance, instead of continuing to talk about "Odd Man Out", Deeley appears to be the "Odd Man Out" himself in his relation with Kate and Anna who change their subject to talk about some young men who would prefer to spend their time with. Thus, what makes the various interpretations of the drama of Old Times authentic is,

according to Morrison, "the innovative use of narrative within the drama" (191). It helps reveal the inhibited feeling of characters.

The characters' journeying through time relates to their fight and continuous aggression claiming that they have complete knowledge of the past that is why, if knowledge of the past represents power for the Pinteresque characters to continue, their memory is the most appropriate medium for achieving that end. Their sudden shifts from one subject to another imply their deliberate evasiveness for the purpose of continuity. Identifying the realistic dimension of Old Times, Esslin states:

> ... Old Times is simply a sparring match between a husband and the wife's former girlfriend for her affections. Each of the two contestants uses memories and evocations of the past as weapons in this confrontation. In the end the two women occupy the marital beds, the husband sits in the armchair between them, symbolically dispossessed of martial rights: "the odd man out" (1984 - 187 - 8).

The characters' past experiences are dramatized through conflicting memories. The various narrative versions of their past experiences create gaps that provide the audience with the opportunity to compare and contrast what is real from what is unreal and watch the different characters' reactions to the same remembered events.

According to Kalson, No Man's Land is an exploration of the fear from "old age" and " a study in stasis" (340). When one arrives at an old age the possibility of choice "reaches zero", says Esslin, "life congeals into the immutable winter of no man's land between life and death" (200). Pinter presents four characters : Hirst, Spooner, Foster and Briggs in

constant struggle to overpower the burden of time which obstructs their attempts to achieve self-assertion, based on the amount of knowledge they could provide about their past through memory. The Pinteresque characters deceive each other and the audience in the same way that the dramatist would do for purposes of achieving certain dramatic ends.

No Mans's Land's title has more than one level of understanding. It may possible stand for the artist's creative imagination and sensibility as Kalson rightly confirms. It may also stand for the unattainable, the unspeakable, the mysterious and the unexplored.

In No Man's Land, Pinter uses memory to enable characters to create one another and feel at one through presenting various details about their past experiences. Fighting for two hours in their attempts to produce and reproduce various versions of the past, Hirst and Spooner are not so sure if they have ever met. Even they are not fully conscious if they have similar past experiences. They also seek to formulate their own present by creating details and filling in gaps through their dialogues. They existence of Foster is dependent upon the existence of Spooner and Hirst. Their identity stems largely from their social activities. In comparing Pinter's dramatic method of delineating his characters in Old Times to that followed in No Man's Land, Kalson states:

> If in Old Times Deeley and Kate collaborate to create Anna , in No Man's Land each character creates himself by those around him, by offering a persona, imagined or real which may or may not be accepted (347).

In his very stimulating and perceptive book Landscape and Memory, Simon Schama dedicated an entire chapter to the discussion of

the relationship of water and streams of consciousness. He discusses how important water is in the stimulation of the unconscious to feed back man's consciousness in connection with the circulation of life in general. Schama's notion, in a sense, links with Pinter's method of delineating his characters. [7] While Pinter focuses on the inevitability of memory for the continuity and stability of his dramatic character's social reality. Simon Schama goes a step further, in his argument about Joel Barlow's idea of man and nature, to ensure the vital importance of memory in the formulation of man's life. Schama states:

> Barlow knew that to see a river was to be swept up in a great current of myths and memories that was strong enough to carry us back to the first watery element of our existence in the womb. And along that stream were borne some of the most intense of our social and animal passions: the mysterious transmutations of blood and water; the vitality and mortality of heroes, empires, nations, and gods (1996, 247).

Schama's representations of the natural world exemplified in the relation between water and man's consciousness connects with Pinter's dramatic representation of the image of water in No Man's Land. If Pinter stresses the role of water in stimulating consciousness, liquor is a prevalent stimulus motivating the characters to travel frequently through time to experience their past. In addition, Hirst's illusion that he lives in a wonderland, full of lakes and waterfalls reveals his inner fluctuations. It shows his phantasmagoria dramatized in the following words:

> Yes, it's true. I am walking towards a lake. Someone is following me, through the trees. I lose him, easily. I see

> a body in the water, floating. I am excited. I look closer and see. I was mistaken. There is nothing there (95).

Attached to nature as a stimulus of articulating his vague past experiences, Hirst states:

> My true friends look out at me from my album. I had my world. I have it. Don't think now that it's gone. I'll choose to sneer at it, to cast doubt on it, to wonder if it properly existed. No. We're talking of my youth, which can never leave me. No. it existed. It was solid, the people I it were solid, while ... transformed by light, while being sensitive ... to all the changing light (45).

His focus on the past reveals his nostalgia and elegiac tone shown in his following words which reveal his desire to escape into a land of waterfalls which appears to be a "no man's land".

> ... I hear sounds of Birds. Don't you hear them? Sounds I never heard before. I hear them as they must have sounded then, when I was young, although I never heard them then, although they sounded about us then (94).

The inconclusive talks and evasive nature of characters reveal various aspects of their motivations and expectations. Both Hirst and Spooner "speak to each other", says Hayman, "as if they had met for the first time earlier in the evening" (1980, 100). The absurdity of the human situation shown in the final dialogue which ends the drama reveals Hirst's acute sense of absurdity and his stagnant state of mind dramatized in the following dialogue:

> Foster
>
> So that nothing else will happen forever. You'll simply be sitting here forever.

Briggs.

But not alone.

Foster

No. we'll be with you. Briggs and me.

Pause.

Hirst

Its' night

Foster

And will always be night.

Briggs.

Because the subject.

Foster

Can never be changed.

Silence (94).

In No Man's Land characters have no autonomous existence of their own due to their loss of their sense of time and place. At one plane of interpretation, the characters' social activities represent various aspects of one character, perhaps the character of their author, or any other author or artist. "They are ... four aspects of their author," says Kalson, "they become the creative imagination seeking its twisting, turning way within the darkness of the cosmos, an infinity within the confines of the room of the mind" (343).

Hirst recalls what he really perceives of the past, not the actual past. Therefore, the past is only a perceived image. This notion which makes characters lose the real sense of place and identity connects with Tom Vanderbilt's argument of the real place and man's "idea" about the place in

that "if place was once able to trigger memory, today it is often the perceived memory, that triggers the place" (1998, 73).

Pinter's stress of the sense of place and the role of memory in realizing the characters' unachieved goals in life is apparent in No Man's Land. For instance, the image of Bolsover street in the heart of London "becomes symbolic", says Kalson, "of no man's land: a world of blind alleys, unfulfilled hopes and 'unaccountable dreams'" (342). It sheds light on the image of the contemporary city with its complexities and eccentricities.

Similarly, the words that Hirst said at the outset of the play which Spooner ironically repeats at the end in that Hirst lives in no man's land, which is sterile, icy and silent, are dramatically significant for they pinpoint the multifaceted planes of understanding the drama. He states:

> No. you are in no man's land. Which never moves, which never changes, which never grows older, but which remains forever, icy and silent.
>
> Silence
>
> I'll drink to that
>
> He drinks.
>
> Slow Fade (95)

In the late 1980s, Pinter's socio-psychological dramatic vision has developed to include a political dimension. He defends the politically oppressed, for their inability to assert their own identity. Therefore, the nature of the dramatic protagonist changes, particularly, in such plays as Mountain Language, Party Time (1991), The New World Order (1991) and

Moonlight (1993). For instance, The New World Order, a ten minute satiric drama written in response to the Gulf War, whose title is taken from one of George Bush's political phrases, depicts the oppression and torture that "two men inflict", in Lois Gordon's view, "upon an innocent" (577). The development of Pinter's vision corresponds with the radical changes in which "the new world order has reduced all dissent or individuality" says Lois Gordon, "to blind conformity" (577).

To conclude, two points are worthy of reference in No Man's Land. One relates to the absence of physical fight in spite of the presence of verbal violence, for the characters are artists and intellectuals suing their verbal faculties with the help of memory in dramatic discourse where their repetitive use of language creates a sense of stasis. The other points to the absence of women characters in the drama, though, their centrality of the dramatic discourse is felt in Spooner's continuous reference to them as mothers, wives and friends. This is perhaps due to the characters' inability to act or take decisions particularly Hirst, who like T.S. Eliot's "Prufrock", is incapable of communication. He appears as "a dramatized Prufrock, becoming more and more afraid to act" (302), in Jones' words. This kind of form / structure shows Pinter's skilful ability to create meaning in the forms of dramatic situations.

Thus, motivations behind the Pinterian characters' journeying without and within the self are connected with their territorial struggle, to assert their human existence, with the aim of formulating a vitalized image of their social reality. It is also observed that, although Pinter warns people against clarity of communication for the purpose of finding a shelter and a

way of living, he implements the characters' journey into the interior to achieve communication through their verbal and non-verbal activities.

While Deeley, Kate and Anna in Old Times have, in many ways, real existence at some time whether at present or in the past Spooner, Hirst, Foster and Briggs' real existence is not felt. It is also realized that Pinter's emphasis on the negative impact of time on man echoes Proust's view of time as a monster of damnation. This is shown in the Pinteresque characters' constant struggle to recall their past experiences through their memory which can only present a deformed image of reality. It is also realized that Pinter's method of representing his characters and dramatic action gears to the contemporary critical approaches. The intersection of the three dimensions of time in the lives of characters amounts to the relative concept of time in which the characters dwell and experience its happenings.

Notes

(1) This research paper is an updated version of a presentation the researcher made at the annual conference of the International Society for Contemporary Literature and Theatre, entitled: "The Journey In Contemporary Literature and Theatre", held in Verbania Intra, Milan, Italy, July, 1994. The researcher also made a "Report" in Arabic of the conference, published in Theatre Magazine, (Cairo, No. 78, May 1995), pp. 68-69.

(2) For illustrating the role of memory in creative writing, particularly literary writing with specific references to the plays of Pinter, see Bernard F. Dukore, Harold Pinter, (Macmillan: Macmillan Modern Dramatists, 1985).

(3) For more detailed information about Jonathan Culler's structuralist poetics and the mechanics that control the considerations of texts, see Raman Selden, A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory. (Kentucky; University Press of Kentucky, 1985).

(4) The concept of time and its negative impact upon man which has been remarkably dealth with in literature is discussed in Samuel Beckett's Proust, (New York: Grove Press Inc. 1978). In addition, Pinter has theatrically as well as cinematically produced Exiles and Remembrance of Things Past.

(5) For further information about the Past-structuralist theories and Roland Barthes' concept of the plural text, see The Pleasure of the Text, trans. R. Miller (New York; Hill & Wang, 1975).

(6) For further elucidation of the literary signification of the use of narrative, see Valdimir Propp's The Morphology of the Folktale, (Austin: Taxas U.P., 1968).

(7) To ensure the intimate relationship of man and nature through a journey into various continents and minds, see Simon Schama's Landscape and Memory, (New York: Vintage Books, 1996) which discusses Plato's notion of the flow of rivers. It indicates how nature and our bodies are tied up in the same mysterious law of circulation that controls the whole aspects of life. The

book shows the tremendous impact of the Wood, The rock and Water on man.

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Contemporary Irish Drama and Postmodernist Ireland: A Study of Tom Murphy's Conversations on a Homecoming and Dermot Bolger's The Lament For Arthur Cleary

Ever since W.B. Yeats, Lady Gregory, Austin Clarke and J.M. Synge, Irish writers have been historicizing, politicizing, criticizing and dramatizing their history, with the aim of restructuring, revitalizing and revising it, in an attempt to make sense of it for the sake of their own generation and the generations to come. The Irish literary revival, which began in the 1950s with the poetry of Patrick Kavanagh, Richard Murphy, Thomas Kinsella and Seamus Heaney, has marked a change in outlook, due to the radical socio-cultural and political transformations that have been taking place in the world. These transformations have formative influences upon contemporary Irish drama for which Anthony Roche identifies a functional role within "the worldwide crisis, of politics and of spirit" (1995,1).

Within this context, relevant questions come to mind: When did contemporary Irish drama begin? Did it start with the first performance of Philadelphia, Here I Come! in 28 September 1964, regarding Brian Friel as "Ireland's most important contemporary writer" (Pine 1990,2)? Or did it begin some time earlier with the dramatic performances as Tom Murphy, Hugh Leonard and John B. Keane" (Roche, 2)? What are the socio-political, cultural and economic changes that have really changed the dramatic features of contemporary Irish drama? Do the themes dealt with in Irish drama remain the same in contemporary Irish drama? Or do they change in correspondence with the clashing ideas of postmodernism? (2) Is

postmodernism, within the contemporary Irish context, an opportunity or a menace? Where do Tom Murphy and Dermot Bolger stand in relation to their contemporaries? What are the motivations for the choice of Tom Murphy's Conversations on A Homecoming and Dermot Bolger's The Lament For Arthur Cleary as subject for this study? Do the two playwrights adhere to Yeats's dramatic vision? Or do they differ in some respects? Do the two plays in question treat the theme of emigration and the image of the border in the same manner? Or do they differ?

"Ireland has always had a particular affinity with drama", Anthony Roche argues in the Introduction to his Contemporary Irish Drama: From Beckett to McGuinness. He traces the functional role of the National Theatre in discussing the Irish national identity through such plays as Synge's The Playboy of The Western World and O'Casey The Plough and The Stars.

Although most critics have attributed the beginning of contemporary Irish drama to the first performance of Friel's Philadelphia, Roche views that the actual beginning goes back to "the ghostly founding father", Samuel Beckett, with his first performance of Waiting for Godot.

Contemporary Irish dramatists have confronted obstacles in presenting their plays in The Abbey after the death of Yeats. That was because of the conventional rule of Ernest Blythe who, in Roche's view, "ruled the Abbey with a tight fist and an equal lack of imagination" (3). It was until the opening of the New Abbey and Peacock Theatres in 1966 and 1967 that the spirit of dramatic flourishement prevailed. That was due to the theatrical directions of Tomas Mac Anna, Hugh Hunt and Alan

Simpson. Practical examples of vital theatrical activities are evident in the performance of Murphy's plays, particularly Famine and also, in the establishment of the experimental theatre of the Pike whose collaboration with Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop in London resulted in the performance of plays that The Abbey Theatre rejected.

Such Irish dramatists of the 1970s and the 1980s as Fitan O'Toole, John Wateres, Ferdia Mac Anna, Richard Kearney, Tom Murphy and Dermot Bolger have been aware of postmodernism as a trend propagating progress based on radical technological and industrial discoveries. It has been natural for contemporary Irish dramatists to search for new theatrical emblems to "offer alternative narratives whose aim is liberation, a setting free of ghosts" (Roche, 12).

Surveying postmodernism, it has been observed that due to the multifaceted planes of understanding its concept and because of its interrelational connections with various natural and human disciplines, it is not easy to have a definite concept of it without relating it to a particular context.

According to most dictionaries "postmodern" would suggest what comes after discourse, or, it would mean a continuation of it. It could also signify modernization of the coming economic and technological developments that have been taking place due to the capitalist and industrial progress. In the 1980s, it was not possible to arrive at a definite concept of postmodernism for, in Dick Hebdige's view, as in Baudirllard's concept, that was because of the term's transcendence to other spheres of knowledge. The term could also mean postnarrative. One of the concepts

of postmodernism that copes with the subject of this research relates to Jean Baudrillard's equation of the term with modernism, with its empty hopes and lost dreams. This view highlights the nihilistic postmodernist image of Ireland (3). One of the generally accepted concepts of postmodernism relates to its equation with contemporaneity.

Analyzing the postmodernist image of Ireland, dramatized in Tom Murphy's Conversations on A Homecoming and Dermot Bolger's The Lament For Arthur Cleary is done within the background of the Yeatsian intellectual and theatrical world and in connection with the changing attitude of the Irish dramatists towards history, Ireland and literature.

In his "Ireland and the Arts", Yeats stresses the importance of history for the Irish writer to consolidate a location for his people where "writers and craftsmen of many kinds master this history and these legends", says Yeats, "and fit upon their memory the appearance of mountains and rivers and make it all visible again in their arts, so that Irishmen, even though, they had gone thousands of miles away, would still be in their own country" (Yeats 1961, 205-6). Viewing the theatre as a dynamic representational form of consolidating the intense lives of people, Yeats sees that "tragedy must always be a drowning and breaking of the dykes that separates man from man, and that it is upon these dykes comedy keeps home" (241). To achieve that end, Yeats experimented on various dramatic techniques, followed in the cycle of his five plays, based on his dramatization of the life and death of his legendary hero Cuchulain. (4)

However, "Yeats is not the only example of a writer", says Seamus Deane, "making history palatable by imagining it as a version of the

personality. Synge and Austin Clarke also come to mind. Synge's West, and Clarke's medieval, monastic, Ireland are not historically accurate so much as imaginatively useful ..." (Deane 1985, 32-33).

Pinpointing Yeats's dynamic impact on Irish tradition, Seamus Deane writes:

> The principle of continuity which he-[Yeats] established in literature, stretching from Swift to the revival and that which Pearce established in politics, stretching from Wolfe Tone to the men of 1916, are both exemplary instances of the manner in which tradition becomes an instrument for the present. Without such a tradition, or the idea of it, history appeared gapped, discontinuous, unmanageably complex (36).

Yeats's 'Irishness' which is, according to Seamus Deane, "partly genetic and partly environmental" (29), made him adopt an anti-modernist attitude. That was, in a sense, due to his misreading of such modernist thinkers and writers as Locke and Newton. It also relates to his conventional views of such eighteenth-century thinkers as Berkeley, Swift, Burke, Goldsmith and Sheridan. Dean states:

> ... Yeats claims that the eighteenth century Irish writers have in common a specifically anti-modernist outlook. Berkeley's refutation of Locke, Swift's attacks on the Royal society and on the mercantile system, goldsmith's lament for the old way of life destroyed by 'luxury' and the agrarian revolution and ... Burke's great tirade against the French Revolution, were all, in his view, attempts to stem 'the filthy modern tide' for which empiricism, science and parliamentary democracy were responsible (28).

Thus, along with Yeats, a number of modern Irish writers seem to have isolated Ireland from experiencing modernism. For this reason, when Ireland is destined to experience postmodernism, she finds herself dislocated and isolated, Fintan O'Toole cites Anthony Roche to identify the very core of the crisis in that Ireland "has passed from a traditional to a postmodern society without encountering modernism" (129).

Discussing Yeats's dramatic vision in connection with the contemporary Irish scene, Shaun Richards equates postmodernism with global commercialism and, finds in Yeats's theatrical views a kind of resistance in that "theatre in its ability to recuperate the past, formed a positive point of view of cultural resistance to what we might see as the real crisis of nihilism within postmodernism - its weakening of the subject, its reassuring of difference and the establishment of the economy of the global mall" (1994, 208).

Yeats's influential dramatic impact upon contemporary Irish dramatists, particularly, Murphy and Bolger can be discerned in their experimentation on new theatrical techniques manifest in Yeats's adoption of the Japanese Noh tradition, "when his new friend", says Macrae, "was polishing and editing translations done by Ernest Fenellosa" (1995, 100).

Due to their new national consciousness based on the inevitability of history for revitalizing Ireland's socio-cultural and political status, both Murphy and Bolger, like Yeats before them, dramatize history which, in Michael Boss's view, is "a central concern for many Dublin Renaissance writers who had matured intellectually when the battle over the revision of Irish history began in the mid-seventies" (in Westarp 1996, 130).

Along with their persistent attempts to revitalize history, Murphy and Bolger tackle such problems of youth as emigration, unemployment and drugs. By so doing, they are "creating a literature out of the new realities," Fintan O'Toole claims, "confirming that the Irish young are part of the subculture of Europe, drifting in and out of the shifting army of industrial gastarbeiters in Germany or Amsterdam" (in Kenneally 1988, 35).

The discontinuity of a particular form of Irish history sets, in many ways, criteria to see things in their right perspectives. "The very lack of formed modern culture," in O'Toole's view, "is itself a strength, a demand that things be seen anew. The evidence suggests that the new literature of urban Ireland will be less carefully honed than what had gone before, but that it will draw on new realities. Its journey will be without maps" (35). The absence of a fixed map of the world creates a sense of menace and dislocation. Postmodernism pictures the radical changing conditions of western culture, "following the transformations", says Jean Francois Lyotard, "which since the end of the nineteenth century have altered the game rules for science, literature and the arts" (1984, xxiii). Also, the revolution in the field of computer which began in 1965 with the coming of IBM contributed to the formation of the global age. The triumph of postmodernism, at the turn of the century, appears in the impossibility of locating it in one space or in any form or structure, due to its transcendence to diverse spheres of natural and human sciences.

The image of Ireland as a 'journey without maps', is central to the dramatic events of Tom Murphy's Conversations and Dermot Bolger's The

Lament, where the dramatic atmosphere is rather dark and where characters appear dislocated and rootless. Depending on "provoking walk-outs and heated discussion" (Roche, 9), both Conversations and The Lament discuss themes that show a balance between national and international situations and global theatrical language to depict a thorough dissatisfaction and complete refusal of the radical transformations that destroy ethical values. In their dramatization of history, both Murphy and Bolger connect with the Frankfurt School, which views history as a motivating force for liberating the future, a notion that relates to Herbert Murcuse's view, in that regression implies "a progressive function" (1978, 8).[5] In addition, Murphy and Bolger seem to agree with Fredric Jameson in that historical consciousness is essential for individuals to have a new dimension of national awareness which is a historical necessity, for the continuity of life. In terms of the grammatical structure of a language Jameson argues: "If we are unable to unify the past, present and future of the sentence then, we are similarly unable to unify the past, present and future of our own biographical experience or psychic life" (581).

The improvement of Irish social and economic conditions due to the economic progress of the 1960s and the 1970s provides contemporary Irish drama with new themes and novel theatrical devices. In this connection, Michael Kenneally states:

> ... the economic prosperity of the sixties and seventies produced an inevitable clash between former values and those of an increasingly prosperous and liberal minded middle class society. Disregard, if not reject, certain cherished national ideals, Irish society readily embraced

> the social and moral attitudes that had found international favour - a less rigid interpretation of religious dogma, a more open attitude to sex and unabashed commitment to consumerism. This rupture with previous perception of nationality placed serious pleasures on the Irish psyche which, in the literature of the period, manifested themselves in diverse images of dislocation, estrangement and discontinuity. (2)

Although Murphy and Bolger tackle emigration, a theme Friel's Philadelphia, Here I Come! dealt with, they vary as to the nature of its development and its dramatic implications. Also, the image of the border dramatically correlates the problems of world youth, the radical transformations from nationalism to cosmopolitanism, the negation of the other, and the foundation of a global economic system which increasingly brings about the swift growing up of a large number of consumers. Although these postmodernist features destroy, in Edward Said's view, "the dominating coercive systems of knowledge" (Said 1986, 228), they reduce the possibility of human freedom. [(6)]

In Conversations on A Homecoming (first written in 1972/73 with the title The White House, ad reconsidered with the new title in 1984), Murphy like Yeats, finds in the theatre a tool of resistance to defend community, identity and history against, discontinuity. In this drama, "Murphy's dramatic vision", says Etherton, "explored the North American connections of Irish familial, sexual and economic relationships" (134). Conversations pivots around "this bewildering transition, this sense of endlessly facing two ways, in a funny and fearless manner ..." (129).

Commenting on the Irish socio-economic change of the 1960s, Anthony Roche writes:

> During that period, a traditional rural society has experienced accelerating social change through the influx of foreign capital, the advent of television, a move to the cities and a renewal of emigration, the break-down of a conservative way of life and the undermining of its certitudes (129).

Born in Tuam in County Mayo in 1935, the landscape of the Irish west has created in Murphy a deep sense of belonging that made his plays contribute to the development of contemporary Irish drama. Described by Michael Etherton as a "European Irish playwright" (108), Murphy's dramatic vision like Yeats's is impregnated with nineteenth-century German and French literary sources that contributed to the aesthetic dimension of the Irish theatre.

Murphy, like Synge, whose dramatic world is an Irish vision of Baudlaire's stresses such aspects of the western Irish life as "the groggy patriot/publican / general shop man ..." (O' Toole, xi). His theatrical representation of these aspects is skillfully done "without neglecting the soul that Synge feared losing" (xi). His theatrical vision aims at "a personal synthesis of the two great opposites of modern western culture; the desperate revolt against God which has so powerfully shaped twentieth century theatre on the one hand, and a compassionate religious culture of hope and yearning on the other" (xi). (7)

Murphy like his fellow townsman M.J. Molloy made use of the European aesthetic tradition. Their own implementation of artistic history

is drawn upon by their influence by such German philosophers and writers as Hegel, Thomas Mann and Goethe.

Set against Ireland's infatuation with the postmodern image of America during the 1960s, and described by Christopher Murray as "a bar discussion on the political problems of northern Ireland undertaken, for the benefit of a returned emigrant" (in Kenneally, 281). Conversations dramatizes disillusioned characters "left with little to do but scratch at each other's sores" (O"Toole, xi).

In Conversations, characters appear stateless, dislocated and alienated. They "are on the run even when they're standing still, seeking an escape from inherited conditions that threaten to stifle their sense of joy and of possibility working to find a more unconstrained outlet for their imaginations" (129).

However, Murphy's dramatization of despair implies a sense of hope that arises from a deep sense of belonging which is pivotal to Murphy's drama. The image of the Irish west metaphysically stands as "a nexus of ancient and later beliefs", says Etherton, "of sexual and familiar relations, of 'belonging' to it and 'becoming' fulfilled there" (110). A typical Helegian notion where "the 'process of becoming' is augmented", says Etherton, "by an attendant 'process of belonging" (110). Described by O'Toole as one of Murphy's "death defying plays", Conversations is coloured by the state of Ireland in the 1980s, in its authentic fusion of the classical theatrical forms of the unities, of characterization and of the contemporary Irish themes. The characters adopt such postmodernist ideas as petty capitalism for which Liam stands and travel agencies where Junior

works. However, the drama like other contemporary Irish plays is anti-Aristotelean, in a sense, for "it does not so much rely on a plot, as on a central situation, whose implications are explored", says Roche, "and unfolded in a process which is likelier to be circular and repetitious than straightforward" (6). The drama, in Christopher Murray's view, reveals some of the pub denizens 'nearly' went up to help the down-trodden Catholics. Murphy's scorn is for the mixture of the sympathy and hesitancy shown by such microcosmic Irishmen" (281).

The play's dramatic action centres around the social gathering of the 1960s group of idealists, in the White House Pub, to welcome Michael Ridge back from America. The image of the clock, seen motionless at the outset of the drama, indicates timeless and contemporaneity. It dramatically suggests the timeless and everlasting problems of world youths. Commenting on the play's plot, O'Toole states:

> It is a bathetic version of Kennedy's Camelot / White House. Nd it is a poor man's purgatory, where god in the Broken - down shape of JJ will not show his face, where Michael avoids the fires of Hell with which he has tried to burn himself and Tom lives an eternal suspended adolescence (xi).

The theme of homecoming implies more than one level of understanding. It is not a mere coming back home in terms of time and place, but it is rather a psychological reunion with the self, achieved through the deeply rooted sense of belonging, to the land. This theme is dramatized through the narrative device which "accords the characters the scope to bring to the surface and release all the inhibited passions, gnawing grief of a past that continues to have full hold over the present" (El-

Halawany 1996, 359). Through conversations, characters discuss the Irish past which is impregnated with failures and breakdowns.

When asked about his infatuation by America, Michael, with a new spirit of national consciousness, states:

> This was our roots, Liam. This was to be our continuing cultural cradle: 'Let the word go forth from this time and place' 'what? We could do it again! Wake up, wake up, boys and girls - with a constant flow of good ideas' (1993, 38).

The characters of JJ, which is repeatedly referred to, but like Beckett's Godot, never appears on the stage. At one plane of understanding, it stands for the presence of God and the inevitability of going back to Him, to realize the right course of life. At another level, JJ symbolizes the political establishment. Although Murphy's vision is impregnated with that acute sense o depression and desolation, Michael's homecoming represents a sense of hope. He straightforwardly states: " 'Let the word go forth' from this time and place to friend and foe alike that the torch has been passed to a new generation!" (11).

In conversing with Michael to reveal the sense of dislocation, that Ireland has been experiencing throughout its long history, which culminated in the disillusionment of the 1960s, Tom says:

> ... Since you have nothing to offer but a few distorted memories, and a few personal tricks on the burning monk Cape, I'm marking your card. You've come home to stay, die whatever - and you're welcome - but save us the bullshit .... We've had that from your predecessor. We won't put up with it again. Don't try to emulate him, no re-energizing, cultural cradles or stirring that old plot.

> Now I know you have it in you to take careful account of what I've said, and the security - Michael!- of wiser steps (59).

Murphy's dramatic vision is a blend of 'wholeness' and 'transcendence'. It arises, according to Fintan O'Toole, "from the social and economic changes taking place in the country, the sense of dislocation and division which rapid industrial development produced" (in Kenneally, 25).

Conversations adopts such theatrical forms as music, light, and sound to stress 'Irishness' through "transcending colonial stereotyping and generating independent thought and new ideas" (Etherton, 64). What makes Murphy's drama authentic in, O'Toole view, is "the point that these themes are not technically in opposition to the nature of theatre as social and contemporary" (x). Although Ireland's postcolonial culture is distorted by the culture of the colonizers, the strong sense of belonging reconciles the colonized with the decolonized self.

Although Michael views "the social movement of the minority groups in the sixties, in towns, villages and cities", as the dominating "rising culture" (66), Murphy in Conversations, like McGahern in The Pronographer, views the "sixties liberation as a false one" (in Kenneally, 34). This is probably because of the artificiality of love and the alignment of sex with nature as being "packages for consumption" (34).

Murphy's vision of emigration in Conversations, has a different sense and a specific form of feeling. "The moment of decision to emigrate," says Etherton, "is accompanied by alienation and a deep sexual

ambiguity' (1989, 110). Ethertorn argues that emigration does not just have a sexual dimension in the Freudian sense, but it also has a metaphorical aspect which relates to the "Romantic Quest of journey ... to discover the identity of the undivided self by going away from the place which defines and inhibits the psyche" (111). Going away provides the individual with the opportunity to reevaluate and psychologically reconsider his societal relations, a notion that emigration provides.

Conversations discusses "the intellectual and political crises which grip the Irish ... people both North and South of the border" (4). The border has a double dramatic signification. At one level of understanding, it is a geographical location that marks the end of a nation's border and the beginning of a new one. At another level of interpretation, it implies a metaphysical significance that relates to the limitations of man's knowledge of the world, of the radical changes and the coming of new tendencies and attitudes. "We do not live in a modernizing world but in a capitalist world," Jeffrey Alexander cites Wallerstein's view, arguing that "what makes the world tick is not the need for achievement but the need for profit (in Alexander 1995, 199). [8]

Within the Irish context, postmodernism contributes to the understanding of the socio-cultural and political reality. Its vital importance stems largely from history and society. It is a text without a specific kind of structure, a notion which is dramatically represented in the character of Peggy who desperately recalls Jack Kennedy's idealistic values. Tom very tellingly says:

> 'And that sincerity is always subject to proof. You all love speeches, Right! I know you all, and will a while uphold the unycked humour of your idleness'. I was always a better actor than you, better at everything than anyone round here. 'yet herein will I imitate the sun who doth permit the base contagious clouds to smother up his beauty from the world! (80).

Michael's mysterious departure at the finale of the drama intensifies the dominating atmosphere of heaviness and alienation that prevails. The drama in a metaphysical way reverberates Beckett's Godot. It suggests the unknowability of Michael's fate who says:

> ... But I have to go. Tell JJ I'm sorry I didn't meet him. Tell him .... Tell him I love him (87).

Thus, Murphy manages through the method of narration that Michael and his comrades follow to discuss politics, history and literature.

Born in the North of Dublin in 1959, the author of two novels, the poet of two collections, the playwright of A Dublin Quartet of which The Lament For Arthur Cleary is one, the editor of the Raven Arts Press and the member of the Arts Council of Ireland, Dermot Bolger is one of the young Irish playwrights who radically experimented on texts that deal with the contemporary image of Dublin city. The drama provides a true image of Dublin as an archetype of any contemporary city that experiences change. According to David Grant, The Lament, which The Sunday Tribune regards "as a love-poem to the City of Dublin", "brings a fresh and challenging new voice to the perennial preoccupation of Irish drama with emigration" (1990, vii). Additionally, it dramatizes the contemporary image of a city which is "as a spatial phenomenon is in profound conflict

with time", says Pike, "as the dominating convention of thought in our present society" (xiii).

The Lament, which marks a distinguished and effective collaboration among its author Bolger, director Davis Byrine and dramaturg Maureen White, is based on the old story of a Catholic nobleman who refused to sell his horse at a certain price, at a time the Catholics were not allowed to posses horses above a certain value. As he refused Arthur Leary is killed. 'The return of the native' in the drama is not a Catholic, but an emigrant, Arthur Cleary and the horse is replaced by a motorbike. This story is dramatized to reflect the postmodern alien space of Dublin city where aesthetic, ethical and scientific values are emptied from their human content. Postmodernism, in Lyotard's view, has devalued nationalism due to the radical changes that have brought about decline and collapse of ethical values in his essay "Capitalism, Modernism and Postmodernism". Terry Eagleton ties Lyotard to say that "the games of scientific language ... became the games of the rich, in which whoever is wealthiest has the best chance of being right" (1985, 62-3).

Central to the play's action is the dramatization of Arthur Cleary's socio-psychological and cultural experiences in different European countries seeking for refuge and security. His wandering from Germany to Denmark, and Holland is dramatically represented through narrative technique which reveals his deeply inhibited feelings shared by Kathy and the audience. While Conversations' dramatic setting is the White House pub in the west of Ireland, The Lament's dramatic action centres round the city of Dublin implementing the border as a dramatic correlative to discuss

the postmodern image of Dublin in relation to the themes of emigration, love and alienation.

The Lament dramatizes the alienated hyperspace of Dublin which is inconsistent with "Yeats' demand", in "that art or history rescue consciousness from death" (42). The image of Dublin which is a combination of the past and the present seems strange to Arthur. A nightmarish atmosphere is created because of "the city's ties", says Burton Pike, "with the realm of the dead "through its temples, cemeteries as well as its old buildings" (1981, 4). Unaware of the movement of time and of the spatial impact of Dublin, Arthur states:

> That disco. I was stupid to go back. It used to be my regular. It was crazy to think the same people might be there, but they all seem to have vanished. It was one of the fewer places I knew that was still standing. I suppose they're all married by now (25).

Bolger's dramatic vision of space manifest in Arthur's inability to hold the mysterious postmodern space of Dublin reverberates Jameson's postmodernist views. He explicates:

> ...we ourselves, the human subjects who happen into this new space, have not kept pace with that evolution; there has been a mutation in the object, unaccompanied as yet posses the perceptual equipment to match this new hyperspace (1984, 80)

Jameson's identification of our inability to cope with what happens in the new space relates to the fact that "our perceptual habits were formed in that older kind of space", says Jameson "I have called the space of high modernism" (8). Jameson proceeds to cite Kevin Lynch who claims that

the "alienated city is above all a space in which people are unable to map ... ether their own positions or the urban totality in which they find themselves" (89). This is manifest in Arthur's perception of the dead image of contemporary Dublin:

> ... O'Connel Street. Just like some honky-tonk provincial plaza. Everywhere closed except the burger huts, all the buses gone, everywhere milling around drunk , taking to the glittering lights like aborigines to whisky. Just like provincial kip I've seen dozens of (1990, 22).

Thus, the image of Dublin, like that of any contemporary city has changed 'to a fragmented and subjective kaleidoscope, consistently shifting in time (Pike, xiii).

The Lament treats the subject of emigration within the European context. Unlike Murphy's Conversations, which stresses the homecoming of Michael Ridge from the United States, The Lament discusses the fifteen years of Arthur's bitter experiences in Europe. Coming with a constant sense of belonging to Ireland, to unexpectedly find that life has radically changed, creates in Arthur a sense of perplexity and anxiety for, as Pike says, "the city as a spatial phenomenon is in profound conflict with time as the dominating convention of thought in our present society" (xiii).

Although the central dramatic image of Dublin creates in Arthur two contradictory obsessions of love and hatred which, in a sense, implies man's vacillation between love and hatred "toward the civilization he had created and the culture to which he belongs" (Pike, 26), there is still a sense of hope apparent in the role of women characters in The Lament. Sharon says:

> Young people are to Ireland what champagne is to France. Our finest crop, the cream of our youth, nurtured from birth, raised with tender love by our young state, brought to ripeness and then lucked! For export to your factories and offices. Fellow European ministers, we are but a small land with a small role to play in this great union of nations. But a land with a grcat history (8).

Sharon's historical consciousness implies a possible real sense of life which is beautifully dramatized in Bolger's iconic representations of music, of occasional citations, of recorded poetry, of whispers, and of wonderful sudden changes of light. It makes the drama, in Edward Said's own concept of the text "a being-in-the-world, it therefore addresses anyone who reads" (Said 1983, 33). (9)

Conversations are pivotal to the dramatic action of both Murphy's and Bolger's plays in question. Such women as Anne and Kathy have functional roles in dramatic events. Instead of "being kept to the margins or excluded altogether" (Roche, 383), they reveal, via storytelling deeply repressed feelings, not only of themselves, but also of the audience.

Bolger repeatedly emphasizes his characters' loss of the sense of time and of place shown in the following dialogue:

> Friend: At three in the morning, they'd still be arriving. Is that Arthur Cleary's? have we found the place?
>
> Arthur: This is the place, but now I can't find them. Ma, I can't find you. I can't find my old self. Feel so old ... except when she's beside me (31).

This dialogue reveals the danger that confronts the contemporary man when history is absent, when it "ceases to exist", in Shaun Richard's terms, "as a benchmark for the present" (201). This theme is repeatedly emphasized in The Frontier Guard's occasional check of Arthur's passport which signals the constant travels of youth, a notion which is manifest in Arthur's dialogue with The Frontier Guard:

Eh? Where am I now? which side of the border a I on?

And in reply, the Frontier guard states:

> What does it matter to you Irish? Either side you re a long way from home (35).

Pivotal to the dramatic events of The Lament is the theme of marriage and the problems of the Irish youth. The Porter and his daughter Kathy spotlight on this theme:

> Porter .... Every week there'd be another one of them in the factory and within the month they'd be gone. Fly boys. Drifters. Only certainty was that they'd be gone. How could he build a life for you like I've tried to build for your mother? Tell me, that how? A knacker in a leather jacket, with one hand longer than the other and the rattle of his bike waking the street at every hour of the night. What's so special about him then? (29)

If Michael's departure is mysterious, Arthur's return stresses his Irishness, and his persistent need to belong, to formulate independent thought. He states:

> What's real life; a clean job, pretending you own some mortgaged house on an estate, death from cancer at forty? (39).

Just like Anne in Conversations, who seeks a sense of hope and of love, Kathy admits her love to Arthur. Having the sense of hope, she says:

> I didn't come to you for things. I come to you for hope. I can do without anything, except that. Shag the tea and the bread Arthur, just make me laugh (45)

Arthur refuses to leave Ireland, a theme that confirms one of the major aims of contemporary Irish playwrights who "explore alike the need for reconciliation and compromise", says Claudia Harris, "usually not content to simply show life as it is, they expose the audience to issues which highlight the similar needs of the seemingly dissimilar groups" (in Kenneally, 251). Arthur says:

> ... I'm scared to go back. Fifteen years, love. In Limbo-autobahns, trains, borders. But I was never homeless, always knew I'd come back. Here, at least, I know who I am (46).

The real crisis of Arthur, implied in The Frontier Guard's view, lies in his inability to live within the new space of Dublin whose primary request is to focus on personal interest disregarding any human motivations. He states:

> I own this city and you and the thousands of us who live in warrens of estates and those blocks of rumbling flats. It's ours Kathy, and it doesn't matter what titles they give themselves or what rack rents they collect, it doesn't even matter if they tear down every street so we can't recognize it. They still can't take it from us (47).

Recalling his bitter experiences in European cities, which provided him with a persistent sense of nostalgia for permanently going back home, Arthur states:

> In that limbo between states I wanted it back, everything ... waking in the bay windows of flats with a raw throat from drink, walking to the fifteen acres for a game of ball, or back along the quays always bumping into someone. Even when you were broke you felt you belonged .... Some Sundays in Hamburg I'd walk post the boats tired up at Landensbruck and down the mill between Reeperbahn and St. Pauli, the stink of decaving food in back lanes, the illuminations so tacky in the daylight, and the few bored whores sitting in windows smoking or trying to hustle from doorways. The Turks, the Slavs, the Irish, the white niggers, wandering between the lines of video cabins with their deutschmarks. It was the only part of Hamburg that made me feel at home. (55-56)

However, as the drama progresses, Arthur loses the sense of time and even that of place, because of his vacillation between the strange image of the contemporary city of Dublin and his past awful experiences. He says:

> Wait! .... How long have we been here? .... I keep thinking this happened before. I can't remember things like I used to. have I shown you my passport already? (52-3).

The real tragedy of Arthur lies in his inability to change, to cope with the commercial values. As the drama closes, Arthur states:

> I was always clinging on. never able to change .... It's not easy. I'm scared .... Every moment like a film running through my skull. Never wanted it back so badly (62).

For Bolger, as for many other writers, the city is "an ideal mechanism", says Burton Pike, "that enables him to bring together ... diverse characters, situations, and actions" (8). In this connection, the

young Irish do not feel at one with the most sophisticated postmodernist scene of Dublin manifest in Kathy's dialogue with Arthur:

> Kathy: You're welcome to it. If I had a chance I would be gone tomorrow. Anywhere. Just out of here. Somewhere anonymous, the freedom of some city where if you walked down the longest street not one person would care who you are or where you're from.
>
> Arthur: That can be lonely too.
>
> Girl: You can live with loneliness. You can't live here .... You're different somehow, you're still breathing. May be because you got out. Sometimes ... don't laugh ... sometimes I think they've sucked all the air out of this city and people are walking around opening and closing their mouths with nothing going out (26).

At one level of interpretation, Bolger's Kathy, like Murphy's Anne, symbolizes Ireland, who inspite of her difficult circumstances, is always there having this sense of giving. She has a firm form of feeling that springs from national belonging, a notion that accurately links Yeats's dramatic vision with the contemporary Irish dramatic context which aesthetically fuses history and art to achieve 'regeneration'. This theme shows Murphy's and Bolger's indebtedness to Nietzsche, Thomas Mann, Blake and Shelley.

Discussing the possibility of Ireland's continuation without the presence of her youth symbolized in Kathy's departure and vague disappearance towards the end of the play, The Frontier Guard states:

> She cried, Cleary, walking the quays, praying for the courage to hurl herself in. she held you here for years,

begging you to haunt her. Then she learnt to let you go,
so you could pass on, not remain trapped I her grief (61).

Thus, in The Lament, Dublin stands as an archetypal symbol of a promised land full of love and impregnated with sound and sense. The bifocality of music to its landscape penetrates the inner world of Arthur with all his persistent struggles, defeats and lost hopes.

Murphy's dramatic vision, which comes from his western roots, made him focus on the self in an attempt to consistently make it at peace wit the postmodernist image of Ireland that willingly or unwillingly should keep pace with the economic and political transformations. He finds no solution in emigration because of the inevitable need of the self to conform with its Irishness. He also finds in departure no sense of joy or possibility of real life. The only possible way for survival, in his view, is to be reconciled with the land, an idea which strongly relates to Michael's homecoming in Conversations. The drama follows the postnarrative as a dramatic device to ventilate, the characters' stateless and deeply repressed feelings. Also, the mysterious end of the drama signally corresponds with the economic and social changes of Ireland.

Thus both Murphy and Bolger, in their two distinguished dramatic methods, manage to achieve their ends through open-ended dramatic discourse that entails significant form and true sense of history. They, like Yeats, Synge and Austin Clarke, make history instrumental in dramatizing their themes. Deane argues that "Yeats had demonstrated throughout his long career that the conversion of politics and history into aesthetics carries

with it the obligation to despise the modern world and to seek rescue from it" (33).

Therefore, Murphy and Bolger's dramatic characters, like Yeats, Synge and Friel's, lack the potentials of coping with the radical transformations that have been taking place in the world. Thus, the two playwrights concretized their bleak vision of the down-to-earth image of today's world. This is done through their implementation of such theatrical elements as music, songs, lights, whispers and colour which reveal the influence of the Euro-American popular culture on the contemporary Irish dramatists. In this connection, O'Toole states:

> ... the open influence of American popular culture has provided a useful resource. From McGahern's use of pornography ... to Murphy's use of the movie gangster genre in The Blue Macushla and from Paul Durcan and James Simmons' use of American musical rhythms to the European influence on young writers like Dermot Bolger, Michael O'Loughlin or Niall Quinn, the common cultural currency of Anglo-American, of which Ireland is now a part, has proved a useful literary resource (34-35).

Thus, the contemporaneity of Murphy's Conversations and Bolger's The Lament lurk in their implementation of the postmodern narrative technique, to spotlight on such concurrent themes as emigration and unemployment, taking the contemporary Irish scene as a microcosmic image of the macrocosmic portrait of the world.

Notes

(1) This is a revised research paper of a presentation the researcher made at the annual conference of the International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures, (IASIL), held at the university of Barcelona, Spain, July 1999.

(2) For more informative details about the radical impact of postmodernism, and how it historically arises to encroach the established traditions see: Jean Francois Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition: A Report On Knowledge. Trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi. Forward by Fredric Jameson, (Minneapolis: University of Minesota, 1993).

(3) For further information concerning postmodernism and its various definitions see: Dick Hebdige, Hiding in the light: On Images and Things. (London, 1988). One can also trace Baudrillard's concept of postmodernism in his "The Ecstasy of Communication" in Hal Foster Ed. Postmodern Culture, (London, 1985).

(4) For highlighting the dramatic and culture signification of Yeats' dramatization of the legend of Cuchulain to reveal not only vague dimensions of the poet's character, but also in being implemented as a touchstone to discuss politics and psychology see: Alasdair Macrae. W.B. Yeats: A Literary Life. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995).

(5) For more details about the socio-economic and political dimensions of postmodernism see, Jeffrey C. Alexander's provocative article: "Modern, Anti, Post and Neo", New Left Review No. 210 March/April, 1995, which reveals, according to Alexander, the intellectuals' and philosophers' manipulation of the forces that cause the radical changes that have taken place in our times.

(6) To have more details about the conflicting ideas of postmodernism, see: Edward Said's illuminating article "Orientalism Reconsidered", in Literature, politics and Theory:

Papers from the Essex Conference 1976-84, Francis Barker et al, (London: Methuen 1986).

(7) For further information about the symptoms of the schizophrenic character of the Western mind due to wavering between revolt against tradition and established culture and yearning for religious beliefs as a flagrant source for socio-psychological redemption see; Fintan O'Toole's introduction to Tom Murphy's Conversations on a Homecoming (London; Methuen, 1985) pp. ix - xiv.

(8) For more details about capitalism, postcolonial culture and its devaluation of intellectual achievement see: Terry Eagleton, "Capitalism, Modernism and Potmodernism", New Left Review. No. 151 (may/June, 1985).

(9) For further information about universality and the dialectical relationship between the text and the world see: Edward Said, The World, The Text and the Critic (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press 2, 1983).

(10) Of the impact of the Euro-American popular culture on contemporary Irish dramatists see: Fintan O'Toole's "Island of Saints and Silicon: Literature and Social Change in Contemporary Ireland", Michael Kenneally (ed.), Cultural Contexts and Literary Idioms in Contemporary Irish Literature, (Totawa: Barnes and Noble Books. 1988), pp. 11-35.

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